

VOLUME II (4)

# THE ROAR

PHOBIA EDITION



# letter from the

# EDITOR

This wraps up the 2022-2023 school year! What a crazy ride it's been. This year stands out with the numerous achievements made by students, faculty, and staff. The acrobatics and tumbling team made history with their first ever program win. Congratulations! In addition, several students in the theater department had the opportunity to be cast extras in a Hallmark movie. Don't forget me when you're famous! Finally, I am proud to announce that Mars Hill University can now call their student paper an award winning newspaper. Congratulations to both The Roar staff and the past advisor, Dane Secor, for working hard to make this publication successful. The Roar won The Best of Show Award from North Carolina College Media Association.

To end the semester, The Roar thought it would be interesting to focus on Phobias. Mars Hill University students all share a common theme: we can accomplish anything we put our minds to, as seen by our accomplishments this year. However, there will always be roadblocks and restrictions we have to address such as phobias. Kayla Rice explains in the cover story the difference between a phobia and a fear as well as the importance of how to overcome the challenges of facing a phobia. It is important to understand that phobias are what makes individuals unique and bond us tighter as a community. Especially seniors and master students who can

relate with Leann Crotts in her article on graduation-phobia, the fear of graduation. Leann explains that she doesn't fear receiving her diploma, rather the aftermath of the unknown world of work. In the face off, Braxton Robinson and Professor Hal McDonald look at different stances of AI. Should society fear the evolution of technology? Although both writers agree that the future looks extremely AI involved, they disagree on how society should view these changes. Should we be more cautious or accepting of AI evolution?

With only a few weeks left in the school year, summer is creeping up on us quickly. Tori Franklin devised a workout playlist for students to get pumped to while working on their summer beach bodies. In addition, Tori also created an informational flyer for the Asheville fest. Just in case you're stuck on campus or live close by, there is an exciting event in Asheville ready for you. Regardless of everyone's summer plans, The Roar is excited for what the future has in store for current students and graduates. We are excited to experience and share the successes of next year and if you are interested in joining this wonderful staff there will be plenty of opportunities next year. The Roar will be seeking graphic designers, photographers, and writers. Feel free to connect with me at any time: [hannah\\_frazer@mhu.edu](mailto:hannah_frazer@mhu.edu). See you next school year!

**Hannah Rose Frazer**

*editor-in-chief*

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# HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

KIANA TUCKETT, managing editor

**LGBTQ+ Communities Fear Transphobia and Homophobia Amidst Recent State Legislation**  
Defined by Oxford Dictionaries as an extreme or irrational fear of or aversion to something, phobias are most commonly seen in characterizations such as that of a fear of heights (acrophobia) or a fear of enclosed spaces (claustrophobia). Currently, LGBTQ+ populations fear that homophobia—the dislike of or prejudice against gay people—and transphobia—the dislike of or prejudice against transgender people, have been making their way into over 400 bills across almost half of the United States in 2023, alone. These bills predominantly affect teachers and students in schools and LGBTQ+ youth.

The catalyst of this legislation trend was a bill proposed by the Florida Senate and enacted by governor, Ron DeSantis, in July of 2022. It was named the “Parental Rights in Education” bill, yet is now more commonly referred to by news and media outlets as the “Don’t Say Gay” bill. The legislation restricts discussion

of gender identity and sexual orientation in kindergarten through third grade. Since its proposal over a year ago, several other states have produced almost identical legislation. Some states, such as Texas, are expected to surpass Florida in educational restrictions. On the subject of the “Parental Rights in Education” legislation, Republican State Representative, Joe Harding, reports to CBS News, “when discussions come up as a dad of four kids, children ask questions. Discussions are going to come up. We can’t ban a conversation. We can’t ban a discussion. That’s not what we’re doing.” Though, many are not convinced.

Conversations including gender identity and sexual orientation are often as simple as a teacher discussing their personal life, such as a teacher talking about their spouse and family. And though discussions of heterosexual relations are completely integrated into all aspects of society and will likely never be restricted, same sex marriage was legalized just under 10 years ago. Considering this, many individuals, especially





those such as educators in the LGBTQ+ community or children of such, may now be fearful of the implications that could come from discussing their own family life.

While DeSantis describes the “Don’t Say Gay” legislation as supporting “fundamental rights of parents to make decisions regarding the upbringing and control of their children,” the undertones are seen by many Americans as being rooted in transphobic and homophobic values. If this idea were to be implemented into schools holistically, reaching past gender identity and sexual orientation, it could be a precedent to schools being barred from teaching about various religious or cultural beliefs, as those ideas also inhibit the control parents have in the upbringing and influence of their children’s perspectives. While that may sound ridiculous, this type of legislation could forbid something as simple as a teacher telling her students she has a wife, or it could give room to behaviors as detrimental as hate and prejudice towards homosexual and transgender youth.

In an NPR 2022 article, Arjee Restar, the assistant professor of epidemiology at the University of Washington explained, “The institutionalization of these bills is an overt form of structural transphobia and homophobia, and it goes against all public health evidence in creating a safe and supportive environment for transgender, nonbinary, queer, gay and lesbian youths and teachers to thrive.” While the “Parental Rights in Education ” or “Don’t Say Gay” bill may not overtly propound an anti-LGBTQ+ position, it may lead to more restrictive and explicit laws targeted at transgender and non-heterosexual people. As Florida now reports efforts to restrict books with “topics related to race and gender at the elementary, junior high, and high school levels”, according to Ishena Robinson at the Legal Defense Fund, including many with LGBTQ+ themes, “Don’t Say Gay” legislation may just be the first stepping stone in unraveling all the work put into protections and rights for LGBTQ+ populations.





EDGAR MIRANDA, staff writer

With the start of a new year change is an inevitable part of life, more so for large companies that wish to expand and grow. Online newspapers talk about the new trend, and television channels talk about the next product. One product that hasn't been mentioned as much is the drop of the long-time competitor of Sprite, Sierra Mist. PepsiCo acknowledged its relatively small sales in the soda market. A 20-year-long drink which has been replaced by the launch of a new drink called Starry.

This change is in hopes that it will attract new consumers, and is more specifically oriented toward Gen Z, especially as the demand for lemon-lime sodas continuously grows. Gen Z is associated with the large use of social media platforms and online presence, it was vital for PepsiCo to put out a product that wasn't just good in taste but in looks. Business Insider reported that Neil Saunders, the managing director of retail for Global Data, told CNN the new drink was an effort to align with the Gen-Z aesthetic. Meaning it was "bright, fun, whimsical, Instagram-able, than many of Pepsi's other offerings."

Furthermore, money was another key factor in the

Sierra Mist being dropped. Sprite has raked in more than \$6 billion in sales in comparison with Sierra Mist's less than a tenth of 1% of market share, a dominating performance by Sprite that PepsiCo hoped to change, not only in sales but in options as so stated by the chief marketing officer at PepsiCo Beverages North America, Greg Lyons. He goes on to state that consumers deserve more and as a result supports the companies move to create more lemon-lime sodas.

In the same way of offering choice to the consumer, it has also rolled out a diet version of Starry called Starry Zero Sugar as a way of complimenting another aspect of the soda business, which is a want for a delicious soda- minus the sugar/calories. These sodas are specifically aimed at diabetics and other people who want to reduce their sugar intake. As a result, the company can interact with a larger net of consumers and still produce a lemon-lime soda that anyone could enjoy.

PepsiCo's move could prove vital in their hopes to compete with Sprite and take back some dominance in the soda wars or could prove to be fatal but in the battle of the sodas, perhaps it was the safest move.



# m&m's<sup>®</sup>

## controversy

JAMIE GARCIA, staff writer

For those who are not on the M&M twitter page, a new color has entered the group of M&M spokes candy. Mars Inc, the company that brands M&M, announced on Wednesday, September 28th their new Purple M&M. Purple's image was hinted at on M&M's Instagram story and then finally debuted with her hit single, "I'm Just Gonna Be Me" with the corresponding music video. The purpose was to "celebrate all voices, encouraging people around the world to embrace their authentic selves," M&M shared. Every time the song is streamed Mars Inc. will be donating \$1 of the profit (up to \$500,000) to the non-profit organization "Sing for Hope", whose goal is to bring music and creative outlets around the world to provide healing and equity in the arts.

However, purple is not a new color to the M&M pack. Due to M&M supporters voicing the need for a purple M&M, the color has previously been added to the mix of colors in a package. It was then promoted to its own personal pack which is available in a bulk bag of solely purple. In addition, a pastel version is available in the Lil Nas X pack, a partnership that will add five dollars of every pack sold to Sing for Hope. Keeping this in mind, it seems like Mars Inc. was more focused on rebranding than the contents of the bag.

Compared to the previous female characters, the purple color wears high-top boots and thick eye-lashes, (contrary to stereotypes). Though, this isn't the first time Mars Inc. has tweaked their "spokes candies," for the goal of inclusion, the green M&M's knee-high boots were replaced with flats, Brown's stilettos were replaced with lower heels and even the Orange M&M embraced his anxiety. Some saw this as progression and others as an affront. Mars Incorporated didn't expect these details to be noticed, let alone be too polarizing for Americans. Fox anchor Pete Hegseth, reports on the subject saying,



"I just didn't know that when I was eating like an orange right now, is this orange a man or woman? I don't know. Is this blue? Is it non-binary, is it Democratic? I don't know, it's blue. I don't know. Is green maybe — they are all great. Is green a little bit more environmentally friendly? I've never really thought about it before I put it in my mouth." Backlash hit the M&M company. Many M&M lovers rejected these changes, seeing it as unnecessary. Aside from the controversial publicity that TV News channels featured, a petition was signed by 20,000 people to "Keep the Green M&M Sexy." M&M's response was an indefinite spokes candy pause and no more M&M characters. The new face being the actress, Maya Rudolph.

In other news, an "all-female pack" has been announced by M&M, including only the colors green, brown, and purple. To "celebrate women everywhere who are flipping the status quo," donations will be made to "She is the Music" and "We Are Moving the Needle," branches of Sing for Hope. Despite the culture war controversy of M&M characters, they are not letting it slow down their sales. Because, at the end of the day, it's just chocolate. If you don't like it, then don't eat it, but don't judge me for breaking my diet.



# ACCURACY OF ONLINE FITNESS INFLUENCERS

CARRICK BROMAGE, staff writer

With the trending social media culture, society has become more focused on body image through healthy routines. People who call themselves “personal trainers” are handing out advice via TikTok, Instagram, and other platforms rather than in the gym as a professional. A personal trainer is an expert in physical fitness and exercise. They combine that expertise with interpersonal and motivational skills to lead individuals and groups through exercise routines, while educating them on the most safe and effective ways to achieve and maintain personal fitness. But in a world so heavily reliant on social media, how can one identify the difference between an educated trainer and someone impersonating one for view?

Exercise, whether in the gym or on the field, can cause serious injury if not done properly. Personal trainers are essential to body improvement, because they are equipped to understand proper form. One of the main problems with turning to TikTok or Instagram reels for fitness advice is the length of the video. With the videos being very short, it’s hard for the “trainer” to explain proper detailed technique while demonstrating the exercise. After cycles of pausing and rewatching the video, the viewer then receives no feedback on his or her form. Writer Laura Williams for VeryWellFit explains, “[a person] could inadvertently perform exercises incorrectly, or even unsafely, without knowing it. This is particularly concerning for beginners and those recovering from injuries, as they’re more likely to perform exercises incorrectly.”

In addition, online fitness content can be harmful

for users due to the absence of vetting of video creators. When looking for a free guide to work out, most people simply search “workout video for” whatever they are specifically interested in; however, there is no research further conducted to determine if the online instructor has the needed credentials to be giving out health related information. In addition, the online coach cannot give personalized advice for one’s workout. Andrew Laux, a NASM-certified personal trainer for Find Your Trainer, shares with CNET, “People are individuals, and everyone has individual needs when it comes to their fitness. Baseline conditioning, previous and current injuries, medical history, body shape, goals and physical limits all influence how someone may train to achieve their fitness goals.”

There are clearly numerous drawbacks to using an online source as a personal trainer in exercise. Although there are times of crisis like the pandemic or a crazy schedule where people must turn to the internet for fitness help, it is important to make sure to do accurate research before attempting a heavy barbell squat based solely on instructions from the internet. First of all, the well-educated online trainers usually require payment in order to benefit from their expertise. A person must be open to paying a fee in order to get the most beneficial workout advice. After coming to terms with having to pay, a person should research the background of the trainer and do a test trial video to make sure the person is right for him or her. At the end of the day, training is about one’s personal health and the safest way to achieve fitness goals.





# EFFECTS OF PHYSICAL DEMAND ON AGING

AIMAR BAÑULS CALOMARDE, staff writer

Because of the broad range of activities that make up the world of sports, the age at which athletes can withstand the physical demands of a sport at the highest level varies widely. For example, those who practice chess, recognized as a sport by the International Olympic Committee, will be able to extend their careers to very advanced ages due to the lack of physical demands. Sports like golf allow for competitors like Vijay Singh to play professionally to advanced ages; according to ProCon, golfing without a caddie or cart burns 360 calories per hour, as compared to 900 per hour in soccer. Motor sports are often perceived as less physically demanding because of the use of vehicles, but according to F1 Chronicle, “drivers can lose between 2 and 3 kilograms or 4.4lbs and 6.6lbs per race,” which translates into great physical wear and tear; yet at age 57, Carlos Sainz Sr. won the Dakar rally, one of the most physical competitions in the world.

In high-intensity sports like tennis, soccer, basketball, or football, the age at which athletes usually retire is between 35 and 40 years old. However, as in everything, there are exceptions: Tom Brady finally retired at the age of 45, after 22 seasons in which he earned seven NFL rings, the last one at the age of 43. In basketball, LeBron James is playing his 20th season in the NBA, at the age of 38, having won four rings, and having become last February the league’s all-time leading scorer, surpassing the record held by Kareem

Abdul-Jabbar. Two-time WNBA MVP Candace Parker won her most recent WNBA title in 2021 and at 36 years old, has signed with the Las Vegas Aces for the next WNBA season, while four-time WNBA champion Sue Bird recently retired at 41 years, 246 days old. Serena Williams, for many the greatest tennis player in history, has won 23 Grand Slams throughout her career, getting the last of them at the 2017 Australian Open at the age of 35. After winning that tournament, Serena announced that she was pregnant, making the achievement of that title even more impressive. Lionel Messi, considered by many as the best soccer player in history, has won highest honors both at club and national team level, including the World Cup that was played at the end of last year. He also has seven Ballons d’Or, the annual award for the world’s best player, and at age 35 could earn his eighth one.

More athletes are extending their careers to later ages through advanced injury prevention and recovery techniques, nutrition, and new technologies. For example, in terms of injury recovery, there are many machines that help make the process more effective. Diets adapted to the needs of athletes provide crucial benefits; many of the athletes mentioned have nutritionists who monitor their specific dietary needs daily. All this combined is what generates athletic performance at a high level at older ages.





# SEXISM IN SPORTS

ELIDA TAYLOR, staff writer

The various sports played all around the world unite people that come from all different walks of life. Not only does participating in sports help maintain a healthy lifestyle, but it also teaches discipline, responsibility, and teamwork, which are all important life lessons. It creates a sense of community where many may believe that sports is supposed to be apolitical and neutral. However, between gender pay gaps, lack of media coverage for certain sports, and transgender rights, political issues continue to surround the world of sports daily. One of the biggest issues that the new generation has tried to combat in recent years is sexism.

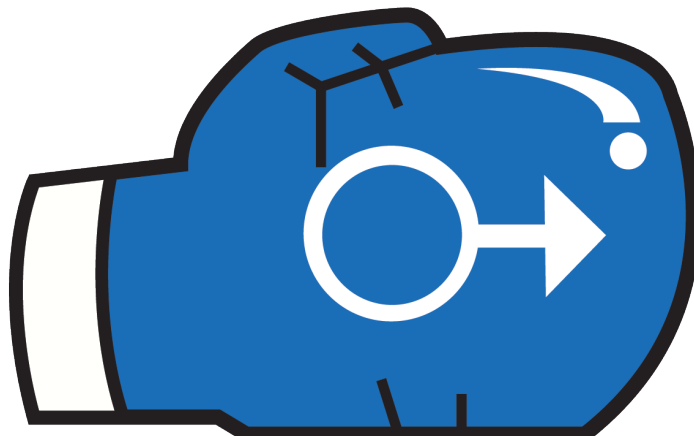
sexism

[noun]

the unfair treatment of people, especially women, because of their sex; the attitude that causes this

Men and women should have equal opportunity when it comes to sports. Although men can be victims of sexism, statistically women and other marginalized genders are most affected. Sexism is an inequality and any action or speech that sets one gender over another is sexist. Sexism is caused by stereotypes and biases that have stuck around for too long, such as the belief that women are caregivers or too emotional while men are leaders and aggressive. There are several stereotypes about differences between men and women that have recently been proven to be untrue. Several of those are debunked by the increasing percentage of women's involvement in sports.

Not many of the big leaders, hosts, and reporters in sports encourage equality, and many commit acts of sexism by sexualizing female athletes. For example, the Fifa Ballon d'Or ceremony is an annual football ceremony that crowns the best men's and women's soccer players of the previous year. The Ballon d'Or is labeled the most prestigious individual award recognizing the best female and male player around the world. The first Ballon d'Or was awarded in 1956, but only recently in 2018 was the Ballon d'Or Feminin to honor the best female introduced and awarded to Ada Hegerberg. What should have been a historical moment turned cold as host Martin Solveig asked Hegerberg to twerk as she came up to claim her well-deserved award. Hegerberg uncomfortably declined in front of a crowd full of shocked faces, and social media immediately called Solveig out for overshadowing an honorable achievement Hegerberg earned. As the ceremony is a place to show professionalism, Solveig's comment came off as sexism where female athletes are consistently putting up with comments similar to this one in a male-dominated setting where such comments would not be made during male categories. Such comments inevitably undermine women's hard work, determination, and long hours that they put into their sport. As a progressive generation we have learned to acknowledge comments that can be degrading. Even you, as a reader, may have realized that sexism can come in the form not only of explicit and harsh, overbearing insults based on gender, but can also come in the force of commonplace, overlooked tropes, such as the phrase "you play like a girl."

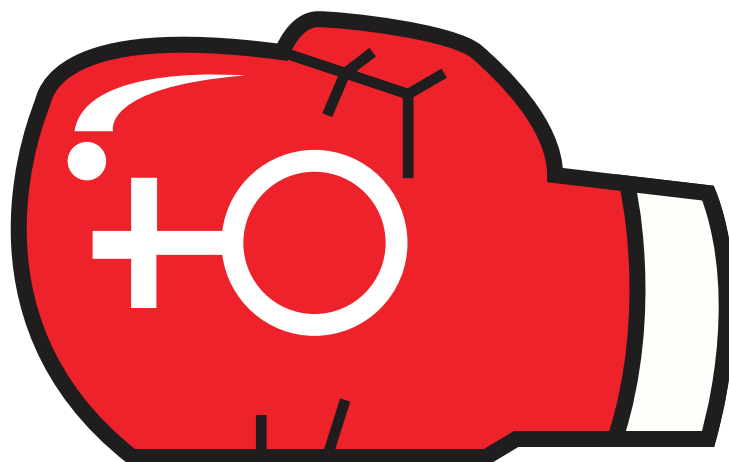




Despite continuous acts of sexism that still get swept under the rug, the passing of Title IX has given female athletes equal opportunities in educational institutions such as colleges and universities, effectively paving the way for women to thrive in what once was a male dominated domain. Sexism in sports does not just pertain to athletes; it also pertains to coaches, athletic directors, university presidents, and more positions that are important in running sports events. However, as recent generations have begun to challenge traditional roles, women are now represented in sports more than they ever have been, which is even evident on our very own campus, as Mars Hill University has hired more female coaches in recent years.

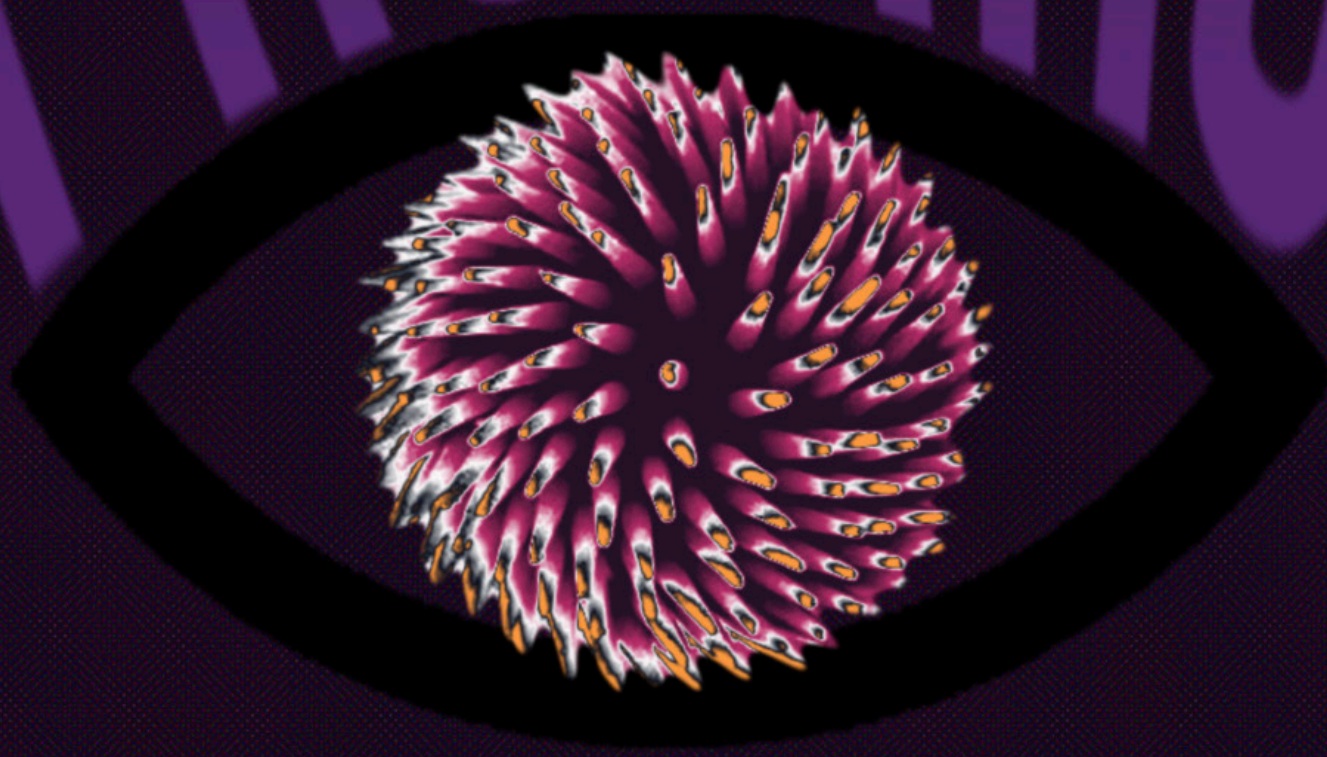
Sexism can also take its form in gender pay gaps. Women are often underpaid even in the highest level of sports such as the WNBA which continues to make less than the NBA even at the minimum. The gender pay gap which not only surrounds sports but women in the general population as well had become a huge topic around 2016 where the US women's soccer team (USWNT) had been victims of inequality in pay and treatment. Four years later, the USWNT won their battle against unequal pay, earning the same amount as men. This made history and let every other sport and league know that change can come with advocacy and dedication.

Sexist beliefs will continue to block opportunities for genders across the world. However, awareness of the problems that surround sexism in sports continues to increase, prompting continued changes for equality in sports.





# PHOBIAS





KAYLA RICE, staff writer

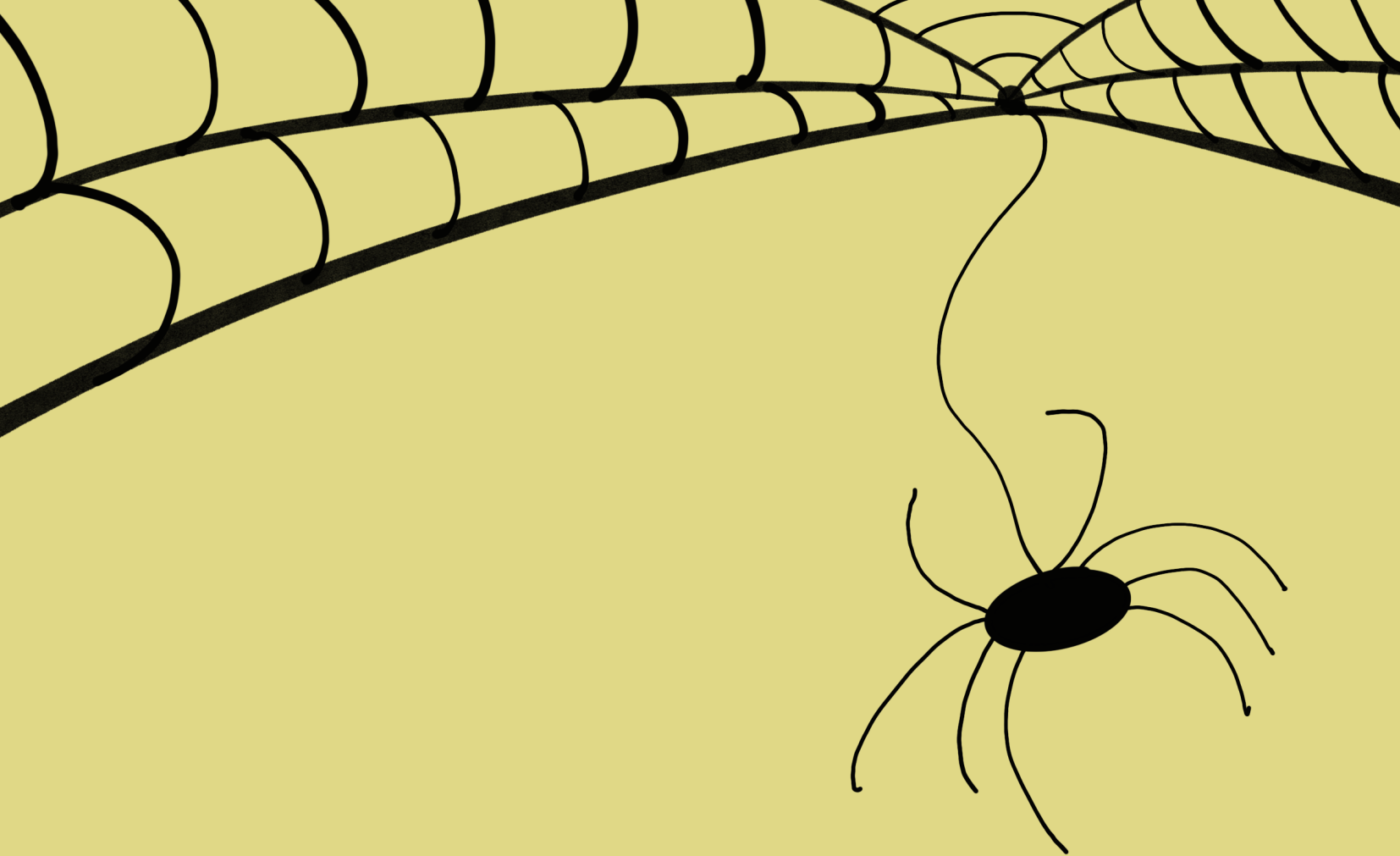
What is a phobia? According to NHS.com, “A phobia is an overwhelming and debilitating fear of an object, place, situation, feeling or animal.” In most cases, a phobia is something that poses no real danger, it’s all in the head. By having a phobia, a person is considered to experience a higher level of fear toward something. When a person encounters his or her phobia, it can trigger a negative response from the body. A person doesn’t have to be physically close to the object or place, their anxiety can be induced by just looking at an image or a video. In severe cases, an individual can suffer an anxiety attack, or change his or her life around in order to avoid contact with the object or situation that causes anxiety.

There are three broad types of phobias that can be evaluated. There’s specific phobias, social phobias, and agoraphobia. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) states that a “specific phobia is an intense, irrational fear of something that poses little or no actual danger. Although adults with phobias may realize that these fears are irrational, even thinking about facing the feared object or situation brings on severe anxiety symptoms.” Some of the most common types of specific phobias are: fear of thunderstorms, heights, blood, and airplanes. A social phobia is when an individual has a phobia of having to participate in social situations. An example of a social phobia is: an individual will avoid social situations because the thought of having to interact with other individuals induces excessive stress.

The third type of phobia is agoraphobia. Google Dictionary defines agoraphobia as “the fear of leaving one’s home or being in a space where it could be difficult to escape from.” Agoraphobia can be seen in many students that are afraid of public speaking and will do anything in his or her power to avoid speaking during class. An additional example would be that an individual would fear using public transportation because they’re not in control of the vehicle and it could be difficult to escape if an accident were to happen. I interviewed a student on campus and asked them about the fear they have of public transportation.







She said, “I’m scared of getting into an accident surrounded by strangers, it makes me feel anxious. That’s why I try to walk everywhere.”


Although similar, a phobia and a fear are not the same thing. Though they both induce the sense of being scared, a phobia is far worse. When an individual comes into contact with something that causes them to have an excessive response of fear to something that poses no danger or real harm, that is a phobia. For example, if one that has a clown phobia experiences an encounter with a clown, their heart rate could spike, they could start feeling really sick and anxious, or they could go into a panic attack. If someone were to be briefly scared of a spider crawling across the floor, that is a normal response of fear. The two can get confused easily, but they are two completely different entities belonging to oneself.

Since fear and a phobia do not hold the same meaning, many people wonder how to diagnose a phobia over a fear. Many phobias can be self-diagnosed; however, others require diagnoses by a psychologist, or psychiatrist in a clinical interview and using diagnostic

guidelines. Most of the time, a phobia is not diagnosed by a medical professional unless the said phobia has a major negative effect on an individual’s life. Agoraphobia can cause a person to become a hermit and never leave their house, even if absolutely necessary. If one has a phobia of open and public spaces, their social life can be little to none and it can determine the paths they will take in life. If you are curious as to whether or not you have a fear of something or a phobia, here are some statements that might apply to you. According to [VeryWellHealth.com](https://www.verywellhealth.com), signs of a phobia include:

- Experience of irrational or excessive stress about coming into contact with the feared object or situation
- Will do anything in their power avoid the feared object or situation
- Experience immediate intense anxiety upon encountering the feared object or situation
- Endure unavoidable objects and situations with intense anxiety.

If any of these statements apply to you, there’s a chance that you have a phobia.



A common misconception of phobias is that they aren't real and used for attention seekers. A phobia is a common type of anxiety disorder. Phobias can affect anyone, no matter age, gender or sex. Having a phobia is quite common in today's world and there are many different types and cases of phobias.

Although there are thousands of phobias, certain phobias are more prevalent than others. A quick Google search will show that the most common fear is arachnophobia, which is the fear of spiders. The next most common phobias are: ophidiophobia, the fear of snakes, acrophobia, the fear of heights, agoraphobia, the fear of being someplace where the escape might be difficult and cynophobia. is. One most common phobias is cynophobia, the fear of dogs. They might be cute and cuddly creatures to most people but some are terrified and find dogs to be horrible and gruesome (The movie "Cujo" is not recommended if you do have cynophobia). Any negative experience with a dog, being barked at, chased or bitten, could lead to cynophobia. Cynophobia affects seven to nine percent of the population.

Although there are more than 500 recognized phobias, not all of them would be considered "normal." There are plenty of phobias that would make someone stop and scratch their head in thought. After some research, a list has been compiled containing some of the most unusual phobias.

- Arachibutyrophobia: The fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of your mouth.
- Xenophobia: The fear of the color yellow.
- Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia: Ironic enough, this is the fear of long words.
- Geliophobia: Fear of laughter: This phobia usually gets confused with gelotophobia- the fear of being laughed at.
- Kathisophobia: The fear of sitting down.
- Optophobia: The fear of opening eyes.
- Ambulophobia: The fear of walking.
- Plutophobia: The fear of money.
- Phobophobia: The fear of having a phobia.



These phobias were hand-picked from multiple websites on the internet based on uniqueness. Having a phobia such as Kathisphobia could make it quite difficult for a person to live their day-to-day life. Sitting down is necessary for most activities such as driving, going to school, finding and maintaining a job, going to restaurants, doctor visits, etc. The same thing goes for ambulophobia. In order to get anywhere, walking is an activity that is required (except for an individual who is handicapped or restricted to a wheelchair). While these phobias may seem strange or unusual to some, they are very real and stress inducing to others.

Although it is not common to hear a lot about people being treated for their phobias, it happens more often than one might think. To be treated for a phobia, an individual does not need to visit a normal

doctor like someone with a cold would. They would have to schedule a visit with a mental health professional to explore their options of treatment that would help best. The treatment options are limited to two types, but they are effective. The first treatment option is psychotherapy. Psychotherapy gives a patient two options they could follow. By participating in psychotherapy, the patient would either do exposure therapy or cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). According to MayoClinic, "Exposure therapy focuses on changing your response to the object or situation that you fear." By exposing the patient to their phobia more than one time, the patient can learn how to control their emotions and become used to the stimulant so they would not have as severe reactions as they did prior to the treatment.







MayoClinic also states that, “cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) involves exposure combined with other techniques to learn ways to view and cope with the feared object or situation differently.” When it comes to medication options, there are two types of medicine an individual could use to try to subside their symptoms of the phobia(s). The two medications are: Beta blockers, which block the stimulating effects of adrenaline, and sedatives, which help an individual relax by reducing stress. All of these options work and can be very helpful to someone who is experiencing an abundant amount of stress from experiencing a phobia.

In sum, phobias are something a lot of people endure even if we do not realize it. As a community, we should find ways to alleviate phobias and the stresses that they bring. To be kind is to be understanding of those who may have a phobia that could seem strange or unusual. Before casting judgment, look deeper into it and how they may be affected by the phobia.



# GYM HYPE

**TILL I COLLAPSE** EMINEM

**GRIZTRONICS** GRIZ & SUBTRONICS

**ONE KISS R3HAB REMIX** CALVIN HARRIS, DUA LIPA, R3HAB

**RICH FLEX** DRAKE (FEAT. 21 SAVAGE)

**DUA LIPA** JACK HARLOW

**MIDDLE CHILD** J.COLE

**JIMMY COOKS** DRAKE (FEAT. 21 SAVAGE)

**HUMBLE SKRILLEX REMIX** SKRILLEX & KENDRICK LAMAR

**MISS YOU** OLIVER TREE & ROBIN SCHULZ

**DIOR** POP SMOKE

**VEGAS** DOJA CAT

**GOING BAD** MEEK MILL (FEAT. DRAKE)

**DO IT MYSELF** RUSS

**ALL THE ABOVE** MAINO, T-PAIN

**DEEP END FREESTYLE** SLEEPY HALLOW, FOUSHEE

**GOOSEBUMPS-REMIX** TRAVIS SCOTT, HVME





**RIVER WHYLESS • TOUBAB KREWE**

25TH YEAR REUNION

**THE BLUE RAGS • EMPIRE STRIKES BRASS**

AMANDA ANNE PLATT &

**THE HONEYCUTTERS • TYLER RAMSEY**

**FLOATING ACTION • THE FRITZ**

**THE DEAD TONGUES • SETH WALKER**

**ALEXA ROSE • TALL TALL TREES**

**THE GET RIGHT BAND • PINK BEDS**

**ANDREW SCOTCHIE & THE RIVER RATS • LYRIC**

5J BARROW • ALEX KRUG COMBO • ANYA HINKLE FEAT. BILLY CARDINE • ASHLEY HEATH  
THE BROTHERS GILLESPIE • C SHREVE THE PROFESSOR • CARLY TAICH • THE CHEEKSTERS  
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19 THE ROAR



LEANN CROTTS, staff writer

Toxicity from Yik Yak

I knew this article was going to be a thing. I was waiting for it, actually.

Yik Yak is the worst “social media” app that has ever existed. If you have never been on Yik Yak, after reading some of the posts on there, you will agree with my assessment of it. The app itself has caused so many issues. For those who have gossiped on there, congratulations. You just wasted your time talking about someone else. Does that make you feel better as a person? For those who have let the gossip ruin their day, who even cares? Are you going to let the opinion of someone, whom you will probably never see again, dictate how you think and feel? Remember, that person had to write said gossip anonymously because they did not want their name on it.

As a user, I became so addicted to Yik Yak. I checked it multiple times a day to make sure my name was not on it, or to see what people said about others. Then one day, I had the revelation that it does not matter what is said on Yik Yak. It is not going to change who I am as a person. I wasted so much time on the app, caring about something that does not matter to my life.

Although it is not all negative on Yik Yak, it comes quite close to being completely negative. If you go onto Yik Yak right now, you will see things like “I really can’t stand \_\_\_\_\_” or other hurtful and/or sexual things, despite the fact that Yik Yak’s terms of service prohibit bullying, harassment, exploitation of minors, and other unacceptable behaviors. Yik Yak is not enforcing their own terms of service policy, at least not on the Mars Hill University Yak.

According to an article in The Optimist, Yik Yak was banned and taken off app stores in 2017 due to an onslaught of parental complaints and bullying. Maci Weather explains in her article, “It’s easy for people to look at these anonymous posts and take a punch to your confidence, but the app mostly becomes toxic to college campuses when social controversies and manipulation of the truths begin.”

The main source of the problem with Yik Yak is the anonymity of the app. Being able to post anonymously on Yik Yak has caused hatred in our community, and in each other.

Uninstall.





# Gradua-phobia

LEANN CROTTS, staff writer

When Hannah Rose gave me the list of topics to write about, “The Fear of Graduating” immediately caught my eye, since I am in the class of 2023. I am not necessarily terrified of graduating; that would imply that I am terrified of putting on a cap and gown and walking across a stage. It is what comes after walking across the stage that is so daunting.

Looking back over our time at MHU, all seniors have memories we made that will last a lifetime. For me, one of those memories is of a party at the Big House my freshman year. It was my first weekend at Mars Hill University, and the first party I attended, so I had no idea what to expect.

My teammates and I walked up to what appeared to be an old country house. The music was so loud you could hear it from down the street. The floor was sticky, and everybody was crowded together shoulder to shoulder. Laughing. Attempting to scream over the music. We stayed. We laughed. We danced. “TWELVE COMING,” someone yelled.

What? I thought. Everyone was rushing out, almost as if the house was an ant hill someone stepped on. My teammate grabbed my arm and we became ants too. I ran through bushes. I fell down a hill or two. Turns out the police never came that night, it was just to clear the house.

Some people have known their entire lives what they want to do after they get their college degree. They say things like, “I’m going to graduate school,” or “I’ve got a job lined up in \*insert occupation here,\*” or something along those lines. Me? I have absolutely no idea. That is where the fear comes in. And it is not necessarily the fear of the unknown, but of something more common--failure. Even if seniors know what they want to do after graduation, that fear of failure often lurks somewhere in the background.

We fear getting stuck, whether that means getting stuck in your hometown, or stuck in a job you do not love. I know that I don’t want to be stuck in my hometown. I want to experience this life to the fullest – I am too spontaneous to stay in the place I grew up in. That is just who I am. This part of our lives is meant for taking a moment and recognizing who you are and what you want out of life.

We also fear life will not turn out how we imagined

it, but life is too short to stress about the little things when everything is going to work out. For example, even if I struggle to find a job to support myself, there are resources and people who can help guide me.

Those who have identified their goals and aspirations still have to figure this life out. Change is inevitable, and something is bound to happen that you are not prepared for. As humans, we have accepted that about life, and we will adapt to whatever changes and challenges life throws at us. I mean, some people get a degree in one thing and then decide years down the road that they want to do something completely different. It just happens, and it is okay. We do not have to have everything figured out for the rest of our lives on graduation day.

So, whenever the time does come, and the Mars Hill University Class of 2023 is putting on their graduation gowns, we can take a breath. Everything is going to work out. We did it.

The class of 2023 would not be where we are today without the support and love of others, so now is the time to take a moment to thank those who have helped you along the way. I would like to take a moment and thank everyone who has guided me to be the person I am today:

To Hannah Rose for allowing me to get some pieces of my writing off my laptop and on paper.

My family – Mom, Dad, Sally, and Chad Crotts. Thank you for the support and constant reminder that I am loved. I needed it. My Professors – Professor Beth Cessna, my advisor. I did it. I made it. Professor Dave Rozeboom, I admire you. James “Security Jamie” Cooke, you guided me in a time of my life that I really needed. Big hug. My friends - Jordan Martindale – my teammate and best friend, told you I would graduate. Laycee Hoffman –a teammate, and a little sister, behave after I graduate. Sarah Stewart – boy, we have really grown haven’t we? Four years as college roommates and we have become friends for life.

To Professor Steil, thank you for failing me in Calculus I my freshman year; I needed that too.

To the Class of 2023, thank you. We all did it.





# SUMMER BUCKET LIST



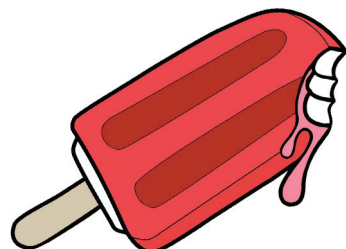
CARRICK BROMAGE, staff writer

## Summer bucket list challenge

Summer, the time of year many college students can't wait for: hot days, time with friends and family, travelling to new destinations, taking part in fun activities or simply just relaxing. In the midst of summer rejuvenation, this time also provides an opportunity to go out of one's comfort zone to try new adventures. Featured below is a bucket list challenge to get you outside of your boundaries.

- Garage Sale: perfect time to clean out one's wardrobe before the start of the new school year.
- Road trip: a good chance to get away with friends to discover a new destination.
- Start a healthy workout routine: it's never too late to achieve a summer body.
- Conquer Expedition Everest: face Disney's highest roller coaster.
- Go on a safari adventure: meet giraffes from your own car window
- Take on learning a new language: communicate with your international friends
- Go viral on TikTok: become the next big influencer
- Make a summer playlist: perfect for a day at the beach
- Rate the different pizza places in your hometown: become the next Barstool pizza review
- Pay for the customer behind you in the drive-thru: never know when it will come back to you

Let's see who's the fastest to complete this challenge!





# POV YOU ARE OUT OF BONUS BUCKS

HANNAH ROSE FRAZER, editor-in-chief

The line at The Hilltop was like a snake winding around the bottom of Day Hall. With only a few weeks left of school, everyone was stuffing themselves with Barbeque Lays chips, fresh hot cinnamon rolls, and loads of refrigerated drinks. It was as if a week's worth of grocery shopping was being done, and I was stuck in the line of the century. Finally, it was my turn.

"A small coffee with oat milk, please," I said, relieved to finally get my caffeine for the day. After scanning my ID, I was ready to carry on with my busy class schedule. Then the card scanner went red...I was out of Bonus Bucks.

"Would you like to pay with a card?" the cashier asked. Shoot, I had no money on me. Sadly, I had to walk away from my essential coffee fuel. It was definitely one of the worst days of my life. I slumped into a chair at the round table in Hilltop and watched as students stuffed their pockets to get rid of their endless amount of Bonus Buck money. I was feeling quite sorry for myself. In the midst of my sadness, I pulled out my phone and sent an email to all my professors: Hi. I will be absent from class today for my own mental wellbeing. I hope you can understand.

Thanks  
Hannah Rose

I mean, honestly, how am I supposed to function without coffee? So I trudged out of Hilltop toward my dorm all the way in Dogwood. Without my daily source of energy, the walk felt more like a workout. By the time I reached my room, my body's energy tank had hit empty, and it was time for a nap. Did I care that

it was only 10 a.m.? Absolutely not. It is said that your body tells you what it needs, and at that moment, my body was begging for more sleep.

After a necessary power nap, I checked my phone, praying for an email back from my professors excusing my absence for the day. I checked the time; it was 11 a.m. The Lion's Den was open! What a relief. I could turn this bad day around with some nice chicken tenders and tater tots.

I jumped out of my cozy bed with excitement, but before grabbing my student ID, I remembered I was out of Bonus Bucks. I guessed I was going to have to settle for whatever surprise was at the dining hall. My face cringed into a ball. Yuck! If I was lucky, Pittman might be serving some banana pudding with lunch.

From that moment on, my day was ruined, and so was the small amount of time left in the school year. Bonus Bucks can really make or break a person. After an entire day of just dining hall food and no coffee, my advice is to use your money wisely, so that you don't run out before end of semester.





# **FACE OFF: SHOULD WE FEAR AI?**

PROFESSOR / STUDENT





## PROFESSOR

Artificial intelligence enriches our lives in countless ways on a daily basis. From Spotify, to Google Maps, to auto-correct on our iPhones, AI plays a supporting role in just about everything we do. As with any powerful technology ever developed, however, AI comes with great potential risks, for every benefit it offers is only one application away from catastrophe. Its ability to process huge quantities of information and generate original text, for example, could easily be used to communicate disinformation on a global scale, and the increasing capability of AI to write computer code could be used to launch cyber-attacks, just to name a couple of possibilities.

While I find such prospects of global catastrophe vaguely troubling, of more immediate concern to me personally, as an educator and writer, are the more insidious, if perhaps less dramatic, dangers that AI poses to education and the arts, areas with I have a lot more direct contact than the computer network that keeps America's power grid running.

Education is, and has always been,

## STUDENT

Artificial intelligence has been a part of the world we know for many decades now. We interact daily with AIs like Siri, Cortana, and Alexa without even thinking about it. While AI is shown throughout many movie genres and tv shows, it is typically with the premise of artificial intelligence seeking to become the dominant race. This has left many people with fears, concerns, and speculations around the rise in usage of new artificial intelligences. So, it leaves us with the question, "should we fear AI?"

The short answer is no, we should not fear AI. The long answer is a bit more complicated. . The hesitancy to trust AI is due to the fact that many people have unrealistic fear and anxiety around it stemming from what they have seen on TV or in movies. The fear surrounding AI generally

about the exchange of information, flowing back and forth between educators and students in, ideally, a dialectical fashion. As any educator or student knows from personal experience, a time comes in every class where students must generate texts of some sort to demonstrate their mastery of this information (in my chosen field of English, these texts most often take the form of essays). With the introduction of AI information processing applications such as ChatGPT, which can almost instantly generate accurate, articulate, and entirely convincing verbal responses to any prompt a student might enter, the assessment of student mastery has become considerably more complicated. Out of curiosity, I recently typed a prompt from my American Lit class into the ChatGPT chat box, and in less than thirty seconds was presented with an original "A" quality response that could have easily passed for one actually written by one of my students. Cheating has always been a temptation in academics, but AI makes it easier, and more convincing, than ever before.

stems from the fear of machinery and artificial intelligence rising up and taking over the human race to become the dominant power. In reality, AI will always rely on humans to program them. AI has no way of receiving the information needed to thrive or take over without human programming. Many fear AI has become feared when, in fact, these programs are simply doing what they are programmed to do. AI is used to perform requested tasks that their developers have programmed them to be capable of doing. Simply, we should not fear AI, but instead should we choose to fear, we should fear AI falling into nefarious hands. If AI is programmed by someone with negative and mal intentions, it can become a problem that the rest of the world is left to fight. While this concept can certainly be fear inducing,

## PROFESSOR HAL MCDONALD

While the capacity of such AI applications to generate new texts out of existing information makes the job of educators more difficult, it threatens the very livelihood of many artists. In the same way that ChatGPT can create original essays to suit any academic need, similar AI applications in other information media can create original works of "art" on any subject and in any style someone chooses: a poem about dogs in the style of Robert Frost, say, or a self-portrait of Ronald McDonald in the style of Van Gogh. If an artist's work is online, it can be sampled, synthesized, and transformed into new creations without attribution or, just as importantly, financial compensation.

For better and for worse, there's no putting the AI genie back in the bottle, and with all the benefits the technology offers we really shouldn't want to. As powerful and ubiquitous as the technology is, however, we must move forward with a spirit of extreme caution to ensure that it does us more good than harm.

## BRAXTON ROBINSON, staff writer

the likeliness of it getting to this point is very low.

Artificial intelligence will continue to grow and redefine how the human race functions and operates. It is not something to be feared in simple terms, but when AI is put into the wrong hands and programmed with bad intentions, it could become an area of worry. For now, we can keep using our Siri and our Alexa to help us through day to day task without fear of their takeover.

# OPINION ON PAWS

HANNAH ROSE FRAZER, editor-in-chief

It's high time we boycott PAWS events! Is the university really going to refuse a student the right of walking the stage at graduation because he or she doesn't have enough PAWS credits? Which is more important, our dedication to the classroom or our attendance at an event? PAWS, acronym for purpose/calling, arts/academics, well-being, and spiritual/character, is a program at Mars Hill University designed to motivate students to get involved outside the learning environment and is a graduation requirement.

The PAWS program was instated for those in the graduation class of 2025 and the classes following as well as any transfer students (but with credit accommodations). For students that entered the university as a freshman under this requirement, the PAWS credit can be seen as an interruption to the journey of a college experience for multiple reasons. One huge frustration students have is that the events are inconvenient. Students are experiencing first hand what it's like to be an adult with changes such as being cut off from daddy's credit card, applying for jobs, and learning to manage a busy schedule. Throw in involvement in clubs or as a student athlete. For example, a student-athlete may have weights in the morning, then class, followed by practice, an after school job, and compiling homework from game day absences. With this rigorous of a schedule this student can barely find the time for relaxation and self care. This demanding schedule does not leave room for the student to attend a graduation required event. A student who would like to remain anonymous shares her feelings on PAWS: "I do my on campus work study job and I also hold two officer positions for my sorority. I have five classes with two being time consuming studio classes. So with that being said, it makes it extremely hard to attend PAWS events on campus. The school expects me to have all these credits from

events as part of a graduation requirement, but I have no room in both a busy schedule of required work and things I enjoy doing on the side such as my art for studio classes." The question becomes, which is more important at graduation and beyond, event credits or studio work to add to a resume?

Another issue regarding PAWS events is that it is too stringent of a requirement. In the Mars Hill University catalog under the PAWS program, it writes, "students must attend 42 events, spread across four different categories" and "a category will be considered 'complete' when a student has attended seven events in that category." By enforcing the events in the catalog, it makes it a university requirement for students, rather than an opportunity for enrichment, which is exactly the problem. As part of the college experience, students want to be able to choose for themselves how time outside the classroom is spent. This feature of college is revoked when a student has to give up valuable free time to attend a PAWS event instead of something of their own choosing. Yes, the student receives the event credit and the event attendance is high, but will the student be happy and engaged? Carrick Bromage, a freshman on the soccer team states, "I love soccer. Any chance the field is open, I try to practice either on my own or with my teammates to ensure my position as a starter. It is already difficult to find a time when both the field is available and the weather is cooperative. With the added requirement of PAWS events and most of the events being held during my window of free time, I find myself putting my soccer goal aside for a school event I am not as eager to attend." Clearly, the obligation of PAWS events can cause a student to be less interested in attending because it wasn't a choice made for themselves rather an added school expectation.



This isn't a "who has it worse" scenario, however, transfer students also struggle with the PAWS events requirement. Junior transfer students have to attend these events while other students in their grade do not. A junior transfer student who would like to remain anonymous feels: "There are many new things I am trying to get adjusted to and PAWS credits take away from other aspects of the school that are more important to focus on. The idea of a student being required to go to events in order to graduate does not create an environment where a student wants to attend such events, especially being an upperclassman transfer and having fellow students who do not have to complete PAWS credits." Instead of bringing these new upperclassman transfer students together with students of their own age, PAWS events single them out even further as a requirement that only they have to complete.

So why does MHU continue the PAWS program? Chaplin Stephanie McLeskey believes the PAWS program is significant to a student's educational experience. "If all you do is go to class, then you don't experience college. PAWS holds students accountable for taking advantage of what the university has to offer, and it also holds the school accountable." Chaplin McLeskey deeply feels that the program enriches a student's growth in college by allowing him or her to take advantage of the school's location, resources, etc.

She wants students to know that they do get a voice in the activities which are made PAWS credits. By emailing Chaplin McLeskey or filling out the online form on MHU presence, a student is able to request events or activities to be for a PAWS credit. "We want our students to feel that they have a sense of ownership over their college experience," expresses Chaplin McLeskey. It is a way for students to find their community on campus and/or their interest for majors or future careers.

Understandably, PAWS credits can both benefit and harm a student's development in college. It is great to have a university who cares enough to guide a student through school, but too much hands-on involvement can cause disinterest. One of the reasons that students choose to attend Mars Hill University is to distance themselves from the rules of home and learn how to manage themselves as an adult. Helicopter administration hinders that learning process. To propose a solution, PAWS credits should be an optional part of a student's learning experience. By enforcing the events as graduation requirements, it causes students' social life to feel controlled rather than giving the event as an option for students to choose.





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