FLU AND COLD PREVENTION ON CAMPUS
Shirley Haberman & Megan Kavanaugh, Student Health Service

According to a recent campus survey, about 25% of University of Pittsburgh students reported that a flu or cold had negatively affected their academic performance. Flu season is upon us and with the current nationwide shortage of flu vaccine projected to last throughout the season, please remind your son or daughter to adhere to the following flu and cold prevention guidelines for a healthy and productive winter season.

Colds and flu come from viruses. When an infected person sneezes, droplets with the virus spread through the air and land on surfaces. If you breathe in the droplets or touch a surface and then your eyes or nose, you can become infected with the virus. During the winter when people spend more time indoors, viruses are transmitted from person to person more easily. This is especially true for students who live in close quarters such as residence halls. Most of the preventive actions to combat a cold or flu are simple no-brainers: covering your nose and mouth with a tissue whenever you cough or sneeze, washing your hands often, and not touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. If you do not have access to soap and water for hand washing, alcohol-based hand wipes and gel sanitizers can kill germs. These simple, preventive steps are especially important this year where most students have not had the flu vaccine.


University of Pittsburgh
Arts and Sciences
Undergraduate Studies
140 Thackery Hall
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DATES TO REMEMBER

> January 5
  • Last day to register for Spring Term.
  • Classes begin.

> January 17
  • Last day to declare a major and register for Fall Term with new major department.
  • University closed in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

> January 18
  • Add/Drop period ends.

> February 14
  • Summer Sessions registration begins.

> March 6 - 13
  • Spring Break.
  • Spring edition of the Pitt Pride.

Academic Calendar is at:

Useful Contact Information more info on the Site Index: www.pitt.edu
A&S Policies, Procedures, Appeals ...................... (412) 624-6480
Academic Resource Center ............................. (412) 648-7920
Academic Support Hotline ............................... (412) 624-2052
Advising Center ............................................ (412) 644-6444
Associate Dean's Office ................................. (412) 624-6480
Career Services ............................................. (412) 648-7130
Counseling Center .......................................... (412) 648-7930
Disability Resources and Services .................... (412) 648-7890
Financial Aid ............................................... (412) 624-7488
Housing, Dining, Student IDs .......................... (412) 648-1100
Office of Experiential Learning ........................ (412) 624-6828
Parking, Transportation and Services ............... (412) 624-8612
Registrar, Transcripts, Grades ......................... (412) 624-7600
Residence Life .............................................. (412) 648-1200
Student Records, Graduation ......................... (412) 624-6776
Summer Sessions ......................................... (412) 624-6600
Student Health Service ................................ (412) 383-1800
Study Abroad ................................................. (412) 648-7413
TTY .............................................................. (412) 383-7355
University Honors College ............................. (412) 624-6880

Find out more about what's happening around campus by visiting Pitt Magazine at:
My mother taught me a very important lesson: Nothing worth doing is ever easy. Whether I had trouble with my math homework in school, or difficulties with my physics assignments at the University, my mother kept telling me about the personal rewards I would reap by tackling difficult problems. She used to say, “Walk life on the rocky road rather than the easy path that is smoothed by others.” Since I was nine years old, I knew that I wanted to become an astronomer. There were many obstacles in my way. Ironically, not the least was my very own parents! Mom and Dad never went to college – Dad didn’t even go to high school. Imagine having a daughter who wants to finish the highest level of University education.

In my home country of Germany, astronomy cannot be studied at the undergraduate level. First, one must obtain a degree in physics, then on to graduate studies in physics and astronomy, find a faculty willing to supervise one’s thesis project, and finally, defend the doctorate in astronomy. My parents have been amazed and somewhat shocked by the paths I have chosen, some hard and all very different from theirs. However, they are well assured of the most important thing – that I have found happiness in pursuing what is important to me – the dream of life as an astronomer.

This year, I was asked to serve as the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, in Arts and Sciences, and this has made my parents proud. My parents will be visiting me here in Pittsburgh for the holidays. I am grateful that they will take the long journey to Pittsburgh, which is now my home. We will visit the Nationality Rooms in the Cathedral of Learning, and I hope to show them the stars over Pittsburgh from Pitt’s Allegheny Observatory on the North Side. Then they can see for themselves the benefits of my life as an astronomer, professor, and now administrator here at the University of Pittsburgh.

Wherever you spend your holidays, our staff sends warm wishes for a winter break of reconnection, relaxation, and reflection with your daughter or son. The best of the season to you and yours!
THE ADVISING CENTER — We’re open during renovations

In order to best serve our students, the Advising Center, located in 252 Thackeray Hall, is undergoing a facelift!

The newly renovated Advising Center will provide advisors and students more privacy and create a spacious, comfortable, and inviting waiting room area - including a plasma television.

Students will be able to clearly identify and walk into the reception area as soon as they get off the elevator. A state-of-the-art identification system will also be installed: incoming students will swipe their ID card and an instant electronic message will transmit to their advisor, alerting them to the student's arrival.

And, the renovation will take place incrementally, so that we can continue to provide student services despite the dust.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Certificate programs are areas of study of approximately 20 credits. Certificate programs complement a student’s major with a specialization and provide opportunities to explore interests outside of one’s major. Some certificates increase a student's understanding of industry-related issues, while others may be for the pure enjoyment of the pursuit of scholarly knowledge.

The Photonics Certificate program began in 2000 in response to the changing nature of technology in the modern world. This interdisciplinary program, jointly administered by Physics, Chemistry, Electrical Engineering, and Telecommunications, gives students the kind of cross-cutting expertise that is often only learned in graduate school or on the job. The certificate addresses topics such as lasers, nonlinear optics, quantum mechanics and photon statistics, semiconductor physics, fiber optics, and ultrafast communications.

The future of communications, imaging, and computing all continue to demand photonics applications, and the photonics field is still heavily research-oriented, which requires a substantial investment in labs and highly-trained experts. Our photonics certificate recipients are heavily recruited both by high-tech companies and grad schools. Learn more at http://www.phyast.pitt.edu/~snoke/photonics.

In contrast, the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Certificate ranges several humanities topics. Program Director Kellie Robertson shares: “Our goal is to expose students to researchers in the fields of history, English, art history, and modern languages. Through the program, undergraduates have accompanied faculty to do research in libraries and archives around the world.” Courses range in topics from Arthurian Literature to Man and Cosmos in the Renaissance.

Students in this program delve into historical and cultural difference by imaginatively projecting themselves into someone's shoes, either shoes from 500 years ago or the shoes of someone who lives across the street. Students who have earned this certificate go on to become teachers, professors, humanities scholars, attorneys and doctors. Learn more at http://www.pitt.edu/~medren/.

GEOLOGY DISCOVERY

Field experiences, internships, and undergraduate research are just some of the ways the University stretches beyond the traditional undergraduate classroom. It is on a recent field experience in Dr. Charles Jones's environmental geology lab that Pitt undergraduate Adam Striegel discovered the unbelievable: a rare fossil of a ferocious amphibian. This discovery establishes both a new species and a new genus, and the fossil is currently under examination by paleontologists at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. “When I actually found out that it was 300 million years old, I felt astonished and happy - this isn’t an every day occurrence, and who does this kind of stuff happen to? I am the second non-scientist to have made such a discovery, from what I’ve heard.” People have asked Adam why he donated this fossil to one of the leading natural history museums instead of selling it on eBay. His response: “The truth is, who wouldn’t want money out of this, but what good would it have done? If I kept it, it wouldn’t be of any benefit to others.” More at http://www.cnn.com/2004/TECH/science/11/09/amphibianf.ap/index.html.
WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM, WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES

In U.S. News and World Report’s America’s Best Colleges 2005, Pitt is listed among colleges and universities nationwide as those that excel in their “Writing in the Disciplines” program, ranking alongside Cornell, Duke, Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and others. In fact, Harvard and Cornell have recently used Pitt’s composition program as a model for their own programs. U.S. News defines Writing in the Disciplines as an: “Institutional Commitment, manifest through an organized approach, to significant student participation in writing embedded in courses at all levels and in all divisions of the curriculum. To accomplish significant writing over time at increasing levels of sophistication, it often includes writing experiences in many different disciplines, varied forms of writing for varied audiences, and iterative writing processes.”

The University of Pittsburgh’s philosophy on writing is that writing is critical to what we do at a university and to what we do in any profession, and it is therefore in everyone’s interest to write well, and to write well according to the standard practices of one’s field. To fulfill on this philosophy, students are required to take a freshmen writing course, either Basic Writing and/or Seminar in Composition, as well as two writing intensive courses, commonly called “W-courses.” W-courses are courses that receive the designation of writing intensive by the University’s College Writing Board, a group of faculty from across the disciplines. In addition to the 90+ W-courses offered this year, many non-W courses, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, involve writing.

W-courses are smaller courses, with writing assignments that involve revision, one-on-one faculty conferences, and different types of assignments throughout the term. These special classes focus on “writing to learn” and “learning to write” as coexisting processes. Dr. David Bartholomae, Chair of the English Department and consultant to the Cornell and Harvard writing programs, shares, “Students learn to think like a political scientist, chemist, historian, or literary critic by writing like a political scientist, chemist, historian, or literary critic...we bring students, as apprentices, into professional writing and, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, into the language-based disciplines, where learning to think professionally and learning to write professionally come close to being the very same thing.” Further, Dr. Bartholomae asserts: “The demands of writing are specific to context and genre. Writing an essay in English is different from writing a report in Chemistry or a research summary in Sociology and all of these are different from writing a legal brief or a report for a manager at Westinghouse. The greater the range of contexts and genres, the more students will be prepared to meet the demands that will face them as writers when they leave us.”

Departments may offer W-courses as a capstone senior seminar, and, “Students have the option of fulfilling one of the required W-courses with advanced composition courses, including courses directed toward the workplace. We have a new certificate program in Public and Professional Writing, with a set of five linked courses and an internship program. In addition we offer courses in writing for the legal professions and it is not unusual for students in Arts and Sciences to use the writing major as part of a dual major, such as writing and philosophy,” says Dr. Bartholomae.

Smaller writing-intensive classes, departmental readings and discussions, and the Writing Center offer A&S undergraduate students a full and rich experience with writing. For more information, check out http://www.wac.pitt.edu/ and http://www.english.pitt.edu/writingcenter/.

STAFF PROFILE - JENNIFER OLIVER

Our Pitt Pride cover photos from fall and this issue are by none other than A&S staff member, Jennifer Oliver! Jennifer is an administrative assistant for Dean N. John Cooper, working on faculty issues, events planning and scheduling. A 2001 graduate of Pitt with a major in non-fiction writing and a minor in Studio Arts, Jennifer has also taken an entire range of photography courses at Pittsburgh Filmmakers, one of the nation’s premier media centers. An animal lover and environmentalist, Jennifer has rescued her two pet cats, Hobbes and Sanford, and enjoys movies, music, and museums.