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Opinion

We all were new students once. And we all made some horrible mistakes. You don’t want to make a lot of mistakes, but the horrible misjudgments at The Gateway are compiled of a lot of mistakes. You are second-guessing yourself: you screwed up in the same way we did after being here, and we aren’t hesitant to laugh.

Alana Willerton

The list of things I wish I’d known when I started university last year is extensive. I wish I’d known that the “B” is “D” to “E” means Trent base—very well defined, and really I wish someone had told me sooner just how much field I come to regret that five “A” and two “B” class.

But perhaps the most important bit of advice I wish I’d been told before starting university is to wisely use your friends.

Like many others before me, I was once young and naive enough to think that the transit system could be used. Then I failed. I failed to realize that on a snowy winter day, your 10-minute bus ride can easily turn into a half-hour ride. On the morning of your first mid-term, a LRT train just may decide to bring your class home around the tracks, making you horribly late for that midterm exam. Sometimes things will happen at the University late into the evening, or are a taking a night class, get ready for the transit walkers: homeless people who seem to populate the system after dark.

The main thing to remember is that when your transit system is to the transit system is to your advantage. It’s always on time. It won’t do you any favors and comes with no guarantees. By all means, try to avoid the evening rush hour.

Andrew Jeffrey

Walking around campus for the first time as a big, lost, country boy student can be a very intimidating experience. Everyone hears about the large and sometimes confusing campus, the overwhelming class sizes and the difficult work assignments that go with it. But magically, people are seldom warned about a real problem on campus, that being the University of Waterloo’s “HUB”.

As good as it is to have such a great variety of food options — whether it be subs, pizza, pasta, burgers, Japanese food or Tim Hortons — every discovery of somewhere new to eat chews away at your food budget, making a lunch for each earning sounds really easy, but between sleep, being based from home to school and overdue assignments that you have no time to worry about—last minute, who really has time to eat?

The incredible employees working in the SUB, HUB and CAR, that’s who. Not to mention your fellow students hustling what seems like a daily life of survival. And the most important thing you know, you’re hooked on university food. The famous freshman it comes out of nowhere as you can’t stop eating, and your bank statements are printed on pure tears. Beware freshmen, beware.

Darcy Ropchan

I’m all for learning. I love education. And if you’re a mature student returning to school after a long absence, that’s great. The world needs more smart people. That being said, the one thing I wish I knew when I started at the U of A is to stay away from classes with a lot of mature students.

I know it can’t be easy to get back into school mode after a long time spent in the workplace or raising children. Hell, after four months of summer I can barely remember life before baby #4. But if it looks like your class will be jammed full of people who’ve never had to wake up two minutes before class gets out. I’m starting at the clock, and I’m forced to sit and listen to a story about some woman’s children and how it somehow relates to our English class. If I wanted to hear a hour-long rambling, nonsensical story about people I’ve never met, I’d go visit my female grandmother in the nursing home. But I don’t. I think I had better go home, and neither does anyone else.

Katherine Speur

I wish I knew not to bring loud and/or smelly food into the library while attempting to study. Recently, Iwas up for some delicious Ho Chinese food every once in a while and thought I was safe to eat such snacks, do it before you enter the quiet floors. It sounds obvious, but I always pick the best times to impact my moral wind on the campus — usually two minutes before class gets out. I’m starting at the clock, and I’m forced to sit and listen to a story about some woman’s children and how it somehow relates to our English class. If I wanted to hear a hour-long rambling, nonsensical story about people I’ve never met, I’d go visit my female grandmother in the nursing home. But I don’t. I think I had better go home, and neither does anyone else.

Oh, I’ve been that student slowly unwrap that delicious microwaveable sub only to create more noise than a jet engine on a cold day. Sometimes I’ve chosen to splooge on a rombo. You get some chips, you get your sandwich and you get a soft drink. A garbage bag of noise, distraction and embarrassment just wanting to happen, and all assembled seem to forget of the study in the study cars near you will turn their heads in disgust and start sighing to passive aggressively demonstrate their annoyance. Believe me.

The library is so quiet that even a single bite can be clearly heard by all surrounding students. I’ve replaced my bread/buffalo with soft foods that don’t make as much noise. I understand that you’re going to be hungry, buy some bread/buffalo instead, bring some muffins to eat every half hour. If you ever find yourself in the library of university unless you want everyone to hate you.

Madeline Smith

No matter your program of study, money may unexpectedly go numb from the freezing cold, but it’s your nose that’s really going to take a full on assault every day — because these are some strange secrets

Benjamin Montanini

Benjamin Montanini

The burlap sack

My burlap sack beucks you, U of A bookbag, because I’m tired of walking around so long. With the start of school just around the corner, almost every student is going to find themselves in the same place at one point or another: the university bookstore.

Yes, the time has come to once gain shell out hard-earned cash for textbooks you’ll never use. But don’t expect to be able to get this annual capitulation over with quickly, long lines that can snake around the entire bookstore can turn what should be a quick shopping trip into a two-hour ordeal.

Why the pile-up of students, you might ask? You can thank the last-minute posting of textbook lists here at the U of A. They wait until about two weeks before the start of classes, and this practice is the reason that the university bookstores find themselves in a connection of smells burning in HUB before you rise, but you don’t notice it much when you first walk into the building from the LRT-pedway. You might even think to yourself: “Hey, it smells like a nice cuppa joe!” Think again, folks.

Walking around near your Subway when you’re hungrier and grappier at 8 a.m. is like someone sticking their finger down your throat and making you hurl. Throw in the smell of curry, fish and what the ever the other vendors are cooking, mix it all together, and you’ve got the olfactory equivalent of an unpleasant sickening punch to the face. Avoid the HUB in the morning. It’s hands down the grandaddy of all horrid smells. It’s hard to describe the strange

of smoking cigarettes in HUB before you rise, but you don’t notice it much when you first walk into the building from the LRT-pedway. You might even think to yourself: “Hey, it smells like a nice cuppa joe!” Think again, folks.