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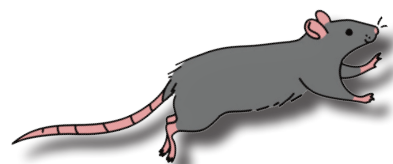
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READING FATIGUE

Story and Design by Amanda Hartnett, Issues & Impact Editor

Photos courtesy of Maya Slickis

Graphics by Anabel Flores, Graphic Artist

Reading has never been just about comprehension. For college students juggling coursework, jobs, and extracurriculars, time is limited, and meaningful interpretation requires patience and focus. Reading has increasingly shifted from an immersive practice to a task to be completed.

“There has to be some kind of incentive to get students to read,” said Christina Bucher, chair of the Department of Rhetoric and Writing. Having been at Berry College for about 31 years, Bucher has observed several curriculum changes within her department. As a professor who works with students in literature and first-year writing courses, she has emphasized efforts to maintain student engagement. One initiative involved shortening reading assignments; an upper-division English course that once required eight to 10 novels per semester has been reduced to about four books, three of which are short stories. Student reading has noticeably declined, prompting Berry professors to seek new ways to encourage engagement. “Even when giving students a choice, they don’t necessarily read it,” said Melissa King, director of the Writing Center.

Berry College is not the only institution that has changed regarding reading materials in recent decades. Bucher said those shifts began in public education. “The SAT changed to shorter passages, and full novels are not always being taught,” she said. This trend is not an isolated instance.

Bucher said the decline has been most apparent in the last 10 years. “I think the pandemic definitely played a role. [The decrease] was already developing because of cell phones and screens, and I’ve found myself continuing to reduce reading assignments,” she said. Students’ reliance on digital devices has become more pronounced with the rise of artificial intelligence. She said this has affected their ability to focus on longer forms, noting a tendency to skim while using their phones. Educators have expressed

concern about student engagement for nearly every generation. Concerns about reading habits, in particular, are not a new phenomenon. “Professors have been complaining for centuries that students are not reading,” said King. She argued that if we looked back to previous centuries and spoke with English professors from those eras, they would likely express the same concern.

King pointed to Greek philosophers as early examples. Plato warned that poor educational practices could lead students to imitate knowledge rather than truly understand it, weakening their ability to sustain intellectual engagement over time. Aristotle cautioned that if education focused too heavily on usefulness rather than intellectual development, they would fail to cultivate thoughtful citizens.

“We have a tendency to think that everything is falling apart,” King said. “We’re always thinking it was better at a different time.” While these concerns are not entirely new, the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) has changed the conditions surrounding them. Because only the first few years of AI use can be examined, new questions about attention and sustained engagement have emerged.

To address these concerns, King said she partnered with Whitney Adams, assistant professor of English, rhetoric and writing, to experiment with changes in Rhetoric and Writing 102, a required first-year writing course. “It’s a pilot course that grabs AI by the horns,” she said. “It looks at the implications of AI use and asks how students can use the technology thoughtfully and ethically.” The course also addresses broader questions about how AI is changing students’ relationships with text, particularly as AI tools make it easier to summarize or bypass longer readings.

Coleman Fannin, the director of the Honors Program, said one of his primary concerns is students turning to AI before engaging with an assigned reading on their own. “The biggest thing I don’t want students to do is immediately Google a reading assignment or turn to ChatGPT to find out what it means,” Fannin said. “They’re skipping the step of thinking for themselves. Every time you have an AI tool do something for you, you’re not getting that practice. You’re farming out your thinking.”

Fannin said he has observed some students approach coursework by searching for ways to succeed without fully engaging with assigned readings. Therefore, students may hope to get good grades with minimal interaction with the material, rather than developing a deeper understanding of the content. “Some of that may have to do with the type of school



they’ve gone to and the type of classes they’ve taken so far,” Fannin said.

Bucher echoed this observation, noting that some students enter college having never read a full book. Researchers in higher education have documented a broader decline in the ability to read longer works, a trend that predates the rise of AI.

“In other words, the effort might be there. They just might not have the skills to do that,” Fannin said. When students are placed into courses without adequate preparation and face unreasonable expectations, assignments can feel impossible. While professors cannot force students to read, Fannin hopes to encourage them to trust that their courses have value and to make a sincere effort, even when comprehension is incomplete.

The consequences of weakened reading skills extend beyond coursework. “The less we engage with richer literature, the more we lose our ability to see deeper connections,” King said. “Ultimately, those connections speak to a larger human experience.” She said, Stories help people make meaning across generations, time periods and backgrounds.

Why attend college without engaging in the learning process? Why seek a diploma without embracing the intellectual experiences meant to shape it? Colleges and



Susie Peters, senior, sitting at Memorial Library

universities promote learning as an active process that requires reading, reflection and sustained attention, not passive participation. To choose an institution founded on learning and then bypass the work of reading and thinking is to abandon the very reason for attending at all. In such cases, higher education can appear less as an opportunity for intellectual development and more as a means to end.



GETTING THROUGH FINALS

Story and Design by Amanda Hartnett,
Issues & Impact Editor
Photos by Alyssa Elmore, Photo Editor
Graphics by Hayleigh Holcomb, Graphics Editor

There is a distinct rhythm to finals week. The ink in highlighters has run out. Calendars are filled to the margins. Sleep becomes negotiable. Just because the semester is coming to an end does not mean that life settles down. Amid this pressure, the quiet fear of falling behind filters the sightline of several students, yet academics, work and demands must be managed simultaneously.

“The purpose of a comprehensive final exam is not to torture you,” Xin Geng, associate professor of accounting said. Finals often have the impression of verdicts. They are the last words of months of work, distilled into a few hours. Geng challenges that claim, insisting that finals are intended not solely to evaluate student achievement but also to encourage learning and reflection at the end of a course.

“There are two major purposes of exams,” Geng said. “[First], it’s a very important evaluation tool. Eventually, we need to give students a grade.” This fact grounds finals in their most recognizable function: assessment. Exams provide a methodical means to determine what students have learned and how well they can apply it under pressure after a semester’s worth of content.

“The second goal of exams is that they play a very important part in students’

learning process.” Finals are not only a conclusion, but rather an extension of the classroom. Analyzing, synthesizing and reviewing content are designed to improve comprehension beyond routine tasks. Therefore, rather than catching students off guard, they are designed to assess mastery of the learning goals.

Progress Over Progression

“Success is seeing a student feel good about the progress they’ve made and the choices they’ve made,” Samantha Class, director of TRIO Student Support Services said. TRIO SSS, a federally funded program that helps low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities improve college retention and graduation rates, emphasizes this perspective. That definition may seem distant during finals week. For many students, one exam can feel overly significant. However, both professors and student support staff offer a more comprehensive view in which students’ success is influenced not just by final results but also by the choices they make along the way.

“Some students start too late,” Geng said. “Not the night before the final. You need more than two hours to prepare for my comprehensive final exam.”

Geng’s focus remains on the behaviors that occur before a last-minute performance rather than on the performance

itself. Early preparation, planned study sessions and realistic awareness of finals-week obligations are themselves indicators of success.

Additionally, how students interact with the content affects their preparation. “Practice is very important,” Geng said. “Students do need to practice a lot after class.” Students are encouraged to review ideas, assess their understanding and identify gaps rather than rely on passive review.

Effective study is anything but passive, according to Kinsey Farmer, associate director of academic transitions. She emphasizes the benefits of revisiting notes and textbooks to reinforce learning, noting that additional applications should also be explored. Creative approaches, such as concept maps or other visual tools, are encouraged. Farmer also recommends explaining material to peers as an effective study strategy.

“If you have a question, don’t wait,” Geng said. “Ask me, ask a tutor or ask a friend.” While it is not ideal to approach instructors late in the semester, he said Berry faculty care about students and will try to help.

Instead of framing office hours as a response to a crisis, Farmer views them as a means to prepare. As they would for a doctor’s appointment, students are encouraged

to bring specific questions and view the interaction as essential to their academic development. Bringing a friend can also help students who feel intimidated.

Geng also challenges the idea that a single exam defines a student’s learning. “Don’t let one exam determine your learning effectiveness,” he said.

His recommendations reflect how students should view this week: as a single point in a longer academic path. Throughout the semester, effort, growth and involvement remain equally important.

Prioritizing Well-Being

As finals week approaches, life’s realities continue. Responsibilities outside of college do not fall silent, a challenge Farmer works to address with students at the Academic Success Center (ASC). She highlights that support works best when it is proactive rather than reactive. That means seeking help at the first signs of uncertainty, stress or overwhelm, not only after grades start to slip.

Students are encouraged to consider how stress affects their daily life, including sleep, attentiveness and emotional well-being. Seeking assistance is not only appropriate but also essential when such areas begin to deteriorate. For instance, students who are under immediate stress can attend same-day counseling sessions.

Farmer also recognized that many students continue to manage personal and academic responsibilities during finals week. There are still commitments outside of the classroom, and feeling overburdened is frequently a result of ability rather than effort. In certain situations, asking for assistance or changing expectations is framed as mak-

ing an informed and responsible decision.

As a starting point, Farmer points out her work with the ASC, which links students to academic consultations, writing assistance, tutoring and counseling services as needed. Asking for assistance is encouraged, even if you don’t know what kind of assistance is needed.

“Asking for help is easier said than done, especially when you’re already over-

ing you, you can hop on Tutor.com and talk to a tutor in real time.” Access to these materials may also entail learning systems that are not always clearly conveyed to many students.

“Some things people expect you to know aren’t actually common sense if you’ve never been exposed to them,” Class said. When taken as a whole, such perspectives support the idea that seeking assistance is

not a last resort. It’s part of the process. Reaching out is one of the decisions that promotes success during finals week.

Finding Your Rhythm

“You have to put your pride aside and be vulnerable, and that can be painful,” said Class. One of the least visible forms of accomplishment during finals week is students’ willingness to acknowledge stress, exhaustion or need for support. It shows up in subtle choices such as choosing rest over fatigue, asking questions before confusion becomes panic, starting earlier than feels necessary or asking for assistance without knowing exactly what to ask for. These decisions may not fully show up on a final exam, but they influence the process of getting to that point.

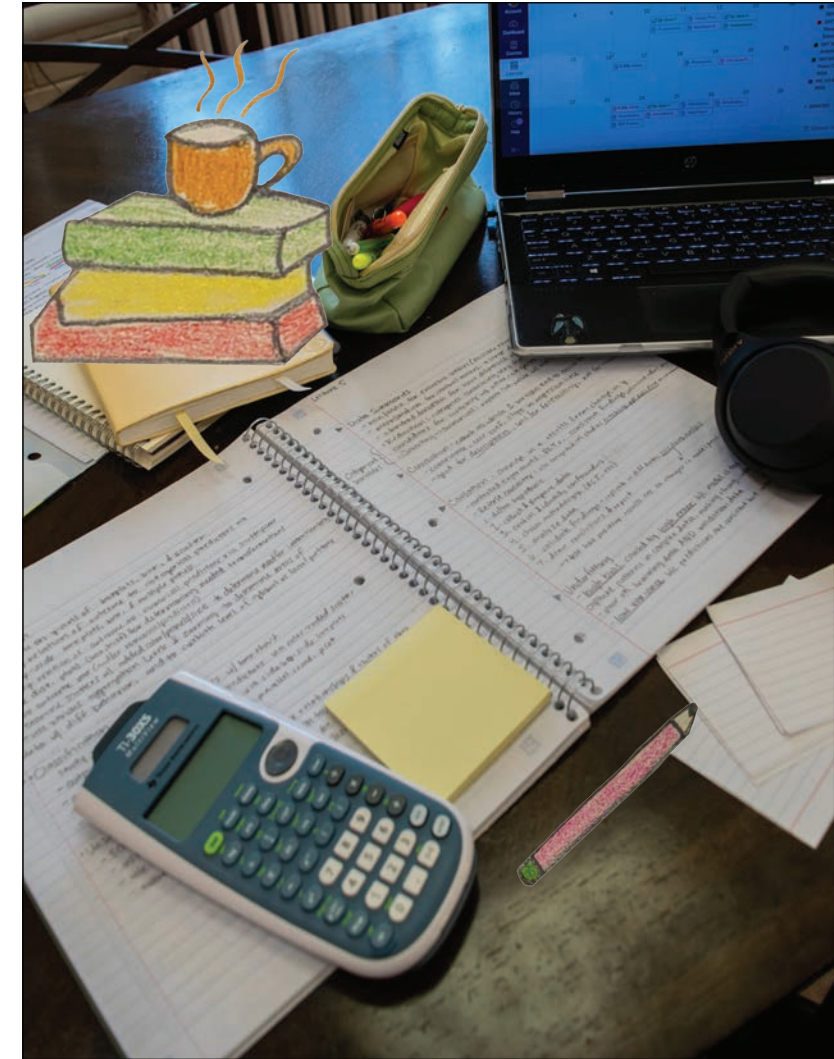
Finals week still has a distinct, packed cadence. However, there is also space for introspection, development and pur-

pose within that rhythm. Final exams may assess students’ knowledge, they also show how they overcome obstacles.

Ultimately, a single score or moment does not determine success. It manifests itself in the silent accumulation of decisions made along the journey. The choice lies in how the student chooses to respond.

whelmed,” Class said. Programs like TRIO SSS take a similar approach, working closely with students who may be first-generation, low-income, or navigating disabilities. “The most simplistic way to explain what we do is our job is to help students graduate,” Class said. That support can be both long-term and immediate.

“If it’s 2 a.m. and one formula is haunt-



A cluttered desk holds notebooks and study materials used for daily coursework.

THE COURAGE TO SELF-DISCLOSE



Story and Design by Amanda Hartnett, Issues & Impact Editor
Graphics by Hayleigh Holcomb, Graphics Editor

When Berry students arrive on campus, many do not realize they may qualify for academic accommodations. Some assume support is reserved for students with severe disabilities, while others never had a 504 plan or formal diagnosis in high school.

Nearly one in four Berry students require accommodations, Anna Sharpe, dean of student success said. Yet the need often remains invisible. Students frequently believe the process is complicated or burdensome, even though accommodations can sometimes be approved the same day.

“They have not been in the driver’s seat of their accommodations up to this point,” Kinsey Farmer, associate director of accessibility resources said. “Often, there has been a teacher and a parent talking about what they need.”

Extended test time is not the only accommodation available, though it is often the one students recognize most readily. When accommodations are mentioned briefly in routine emails about deadlines or coursework, their significance is very easy to miss.

Some accommodations are as basic as dining needs. Katrina Meehan, director of accessibility resources, said students with airborne peanut allergies may not be able to safely enter dining facilities such as Krannert. “If a student has an airborne peanut allergy, it may be unsafe for them to enter Krannert,” Meehan said. “If they go into anaphylactic shock, it’s not going to be safe for them.”

In such cases, dining accommodations can include preordered meals prepared in a safe environment, reduced meal plans or full exemptions. Meehan said these options are intended to ensure students can safely access campus dining, though many remain unaware they exist.

Housing accommodations also extend beyond what many students assume. Meehan said assignments can be adjusted when a student’s medical needs make certain placements unsafe or inaccessible. “If a student is assigned to a third floor in Ford and they can’t do stairs, that’s when housing accommodations matter,” Meehan said. Students who cannot walk long distances may require first-floor or elevator access, or rooms near a bathroom for conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome.



Entrance Signage for Division of Student Success

Photo courtesy of Maya Slickis.

The range of accommodations is broader than many realize, particularly for students with invisible or newly diagnosed disabilities. Students who receive a recent diagnosis of adult Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) may not realize accommodations are available. “That is a whole new world,” Meehan said.

Because accommodations are based on functional barriers rather than diagnoses alone, students may “leave with a list that’s not identical to what they had in high school,” Meehan said, adding “that doesn’t mean one is right or wrong.”

Support can also be tailored to specific challenges. “If internal distractions are the barrier, a reduced-distraction environment may not level the playing field, but for external distractors, it will,” Meehan said.

Temporary challenges also qualify for accommodations. “If it takes longer to process information, we might put in extended time,” she said. “If writing is hard because of a broken arm, we allow typing.”

Many students hesitate to request accommodations because they expect long waits or complicated approval processes. However, the process is often quick and straightforward. “It’s easier and more comfortable for students to self-disclose,” said Sharpe. “In the past, students delivered accommodation letters themselves. Now those letters are sent directly to faculty, removing what can be an intimidating step

We absorb that work so students can focus on being students.”

For students who have no idea where to begin or whether they even qualify, Farmer encourages them to reach out anyway.

“I would just start there,” said Farmer. “If a student isn’t comfortable coming by our office, send an email and ask some general questions. We’re a self-identifying office; we don’t know what we don’t know. At the very least, if accommodations aren’t the right fit, there are other services available, from the writing center to peer tutoring and academic consultations. There are options for any and all of our students.”

In the end, what often leads a student to Accessibility Resources isn’t a diagnosis or a policy; it’s a person who is willing to listen. Across every conversation, administrators returned to the same point: students get connected when someone they trust points them in the right direction.

Berry’s strength, they all stressed, is not just its systems but its people. Mentorship culture means that support rarely comes from a single direction. It’s a constellation, coaches, faculty, staff, peer mentors, friends, all quietly scanning for the moments when a student’s struggle slips into view. As Sharpe put it, this is the kind of campus where the community “activates” around a student once they speak up. Sometimes that activation begins even before the student knows what they need.



GROUP GAMBLE

Story by Connor Coltrane, Writer
Design by Amanda Hartnett, Issues & Impact Editor
Photos courtesy of Maya Slickis
Graphics by Hayleigh Holcomb, Graphics Editor

Group projects: A staple of the experience for any student at any school. Depending on who you ask, they're the best or worst sorts of assignments you can receive. Love them or hate them, group projects aren't going anywhere anytime soon. They're an unavoidable part of student life.

"I think they're valuable," junior communications major, Faith Crockett said. Most work is group work in the wider world, after all, and even solo jobs tend to require coordination and communication with others to get done. As senior student of animal science Aimee Poinsett said, it's "good to learn collaborative skills," through group work. However, just because they're necessary and useful experience, that doesn't mean they're always easy.

"A lot of times with group work, your grade relies on other people's participation," Poinsett said. Thus, any time one is assigned to a group, it tends to be a gamble how well you'll be able to work with them. When asked what sorts of people one is likely to encounter, Crockett named three general categories of group project participants. "There's usually somebody who takes the position of a leader," Crockett said, someone who generally directs the project and brings a vision to the final completion. In many groups, you'll also often find at least one "follower" or deputy participant, whom Crockett describes as the person who is willing to do lots of work, but not necessarily the one coming up with the plans.

Often, as Crockett points out, the positions of leader vs. follower can depend heavily on who in the group is studying a relevant major or otherwise interested in the project for its own sake. "In a science class," Crockett said, "I'm probably not going to lead because I'm not very minded, but for something creative I might."

But there's also the third main type, and it is the type many students meet all too often. Crockett calls them "the ghost. Somebody who leaves the group chat, doesn't say anything or doesn't show up to project meetings. Those are the worst." And it is such "ghosts," that can make a group project far more of a chore than most students bargain for. "Sometimes," Poinsett said, "you just end up doing all the work yourself, and that's not fair."

It's not fair because, in theory, a group project should be an exercise in pooling collective efforts and strengths to accomplish something no one member of the group could accomplish on their own. "When it comes to something that's very complicated," freshman premed major John Hart said, "being part of a group is very efficient." When, not if, one finds oneself part of a group assignment, it is paramount to find a way to distribute the work efficiently. So, how does one go about that?

In theory, friendship can be a helpful factor. As Hart points out, students and workers with established friendships "are willing to cooperate." However, established friendships are not exactly easy to come by; while common interests and classes due to shared



Left to right: Seniors Sam Russell and Brian Thomas Jr. working in their group

majors can help facilitate friendship, the ability to work together with friends is not so reliable.

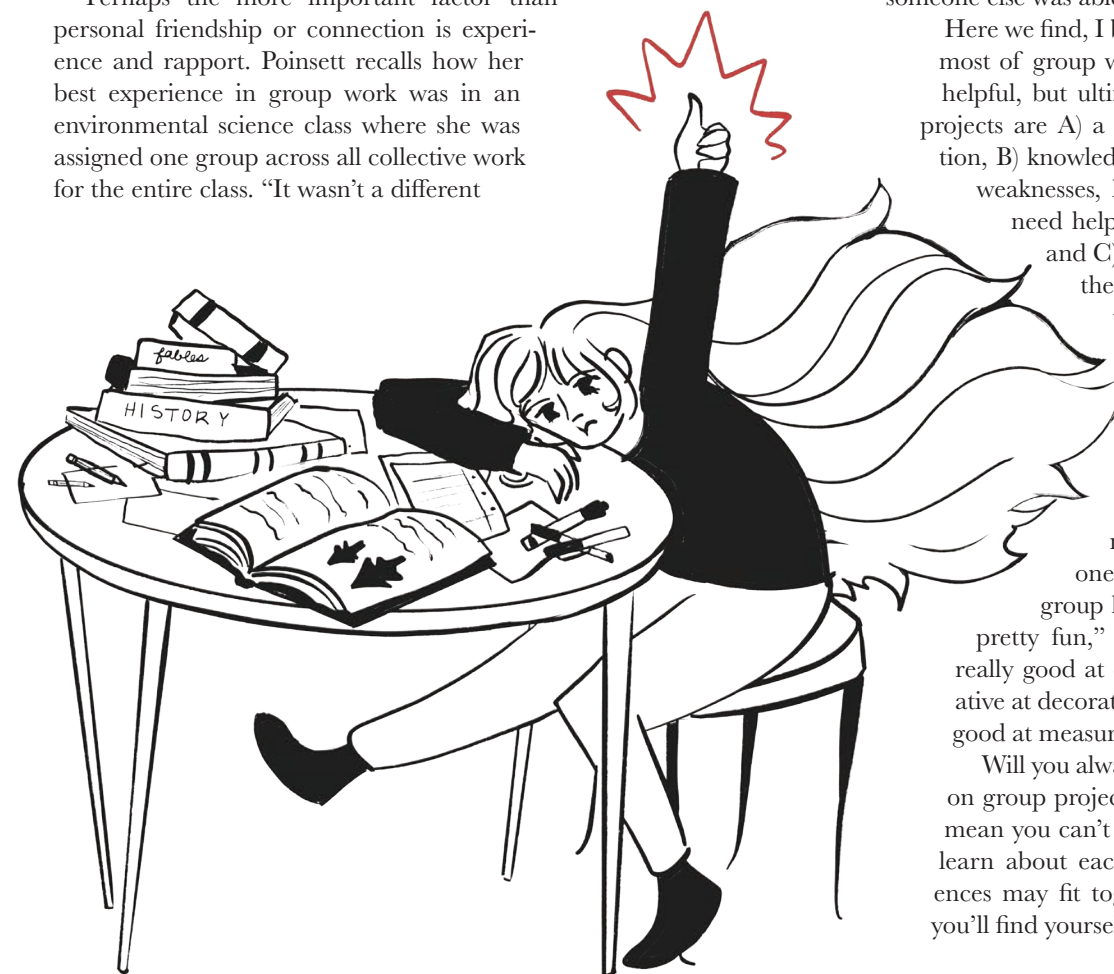
Perhaps the more important factor than personal friendship or connection is experience and rapport. Poinsett recalls how her best experience in group work was in an environmental science class where she was assigned one group across all collective work for the entire class. "It wasn't a different

group of people each time," Poinsett said, "We definitely all did our parts, and when we couldn't, we communicated and someone else was able to compensate."

Here we find, I believe, the crux of how to make the most of group work. Friendship and familiarity are helpful, but ultimately what they provide in group projects are A) a way to facilitate clear communication, B) knowledge of each member's strengths and weaknesses, knowing where each member may need help or where they can best contribute and C) a sense of trust and reliability from the other members of the group. The

third quality can be hard to come by with strangers, but clear communication can work wonders for helping to facilitate this sense and learn what everyone can do best. Sophomore creative technologies student Mary Hernandez summarizes this quite well recounting one group project in which she and her group had to build a robot. "I think it was pretty fun," Hernandez said. "One of us was really good at coding, another one was really creative at decorating the robot, and then another was good at measurements."

Will you always be able to work with your friends on group projects? Of course not. But that doesn't mean you can't still talk things out with each other, learn about each other, find the ways your differences may fit together, and maybe, if you're lucky you'll find yourself working with friends after all.



Study your P A S S I O N

Story and Design by Katelyn Wilburn, Managing Editor

Photos by Sydney Martinez, Photographer and Laila Anderson, Photographer

Berry is a diverse community, filled with students of different backgrounds, current interests and future career plans. There are many things that reflect a student's identity, but one of the first questions asked when meeting person on campus is often about their area of study. Though college majors can play a big role in a person's interests, many are often stereotyped in negative and positive ways. This can affect the overall dignity of the major, hurting perceptions of these students and consequently causing students to question how they move throughout their day.

Valkyrie conducted two polls on Instagram to investigate this phenomenon. When asked what the easiest major is, answers such as "Business 100%" and "Sports Leadership and Strategy" were given. For the most difficult major, "Biochemistry," "Chemistry" and "Physics" were the top responses. These polls directly matched some of the responses given around campus. Freshman economics major Flora Ball talked about times in the past when she introduced herself to students in STEM-related majors.

"When they ask what your major is, if it's anything related to business, I've found they kind of write it off," Ball said.

Sophomore pre-nursing student Grace Wood describes her perspective on similar conversations she has experienced.

"Communications, any of the humanities," Wood said. "We sort of view those majors as easier, and probably the same majors view us as easier."

So, why is there a consensus that STEM majors are considered more difficult? According to Ball, the answer may have to do with the quantity of work given in courses.

"If you're interacting with a med student, an animal science student or even a math major, they'll go on and on about the amount of work and projects they have due," Ball said.

STEM majors often have labs paired with their courses, which bring an extra amount of work and readings to their course load. Learning the intricacies of biology, chemistry or animal science can be difficult and often requires time for applying the principles in a hands-on setting. Another big stereotype of STEM majors is the job security and prestige. It is difficult for other majors to

gain this type of empowerment, as one of the main concerns when making career decisions is financial security.

Sophomore psychology and spanish double major Lynda Arroyo sheds some light on her experience switching her major from Nursing, explaining the difficulty of committing to a major that is considered less secure in the job market.

"Honestly, switching from nursing to psychology was probably the hardest thing that I've been through in my college career, only because it's kind of like you're debating your future just by signing a piece of paper," Arroyo said.

She then dives into her experiences as a psychology major and how the field and mental health are stigmatized. Because of this, some people even feel as though the field of psychology isn't needed and view jobs in the field as scarce.

Humanities majors have had similar experiences as Arroyo. For example, freshman history major Marisa Aguilar explained a specific moment where she spoke with some STEM majors in her class.

"I was in class and we were sitting down and the girls sur-



Students practicing their dance routine.



Art student creating a new piece in the ceramics studio.

"I feel like we need to study what we are passionate about."

-Lynda Arroyo, Sophomore

Lynda Arroyo, Sophomore



rounding me were complaining about the classes they have because they are taking chemistry," Aguilar said. "They are all nursing majors. So, they're all complaining, talking about how chemistry is really difficult, which it is, and I'm just sitting there, being quiet. I'm keeping my mouth shut. Then they turn to me, because they're trying to include me in the conversation. They're like 'what's your major' and I was like 'history,' and they all just kind of smile and slowly nod. Then they go back to talking about nursing."

Students in the fine arts have had stories that are like this one. Junior art major and religion minor Izzac Rumble explained how being an Art major was a personal journey for growing his creativity and spirituality, not simply a career opportunity.

"I do have some friends that are chemistry majors and nursing, I can see just how stressed out they get a lot of the times," Rumble said. "And of course, you know, you don't want that for anybody. So, I try to ask them, you know, what they do in their free time to kind of relieve those stresses, but then they're quick to say, 'what free time?' I kind of blend my own spirituality with my art practice, and understanding that it's good to slow down sometimes and really, you know, take that extra time to care for our mental health as well."

Not everyone has passion for art, just as not everyone has passion for chemistry. But understanding the beauty of this diversity is the first step to lessening the stigma and stereotypes surrounding each major. Every individual in college is studying to build a brighter future. Without STEM related majors, we wouldn't be able to advance technologically to treat patients and develop the world around us to be more efficient. Without humanities and arts majors, we would forget the importance of creating a community full of beauty and meaning. And without social sciences such as psychology, we wouldn't be able to lessen the stressful burdens that weigh on everyone's hearts.

"It's such a blessing to be able to become extremely educated on the topic that you're passionate about because it's more fulfilling to be happy with what you're studying," Said Arroyo. "I feel like everyone has a valuable take. Someone can bring something valuable into life with the education that they bring and what they're interested in. I feel like we need to study what we are passionate about. Because that will not only help us fulfill our lives, but it could help us fulfill the lives of others."

MORE THAN CLUBS

Story and Design by Amanda Hartnett, Issues & Impact Editor
Photos Courtesy of Eloise Lang

A college campus often reflects the larger world, compressing social hierarchies, cultural identities, and power dynamics into a smaller community. However, for many students from marginalized backgrounds, a sense of belonging is not automatic. “Coming to Berry meant stepping into a new culture,” Michelle Hamoui, president of Orgullo, a student organization that celebrates Hispanic and Latino cultures said. “It’s hard to find a space where you truly feel safe being yourself.”

At Berry College, a predominantly white institution, Hamoui experienced being a minority for the first time and described the transition as overwhelming. Her experience is not unique. In environments that can foster isolation, minority-support organizations offer spaces where students feel noticed, and connected.

For some students, these organizations are more than extracurriculars; they are essential to their sense of belonging. “The Brotherhood is the only reason I’m at Berry College,” said Quanah Martin, president of Berry Brotherhood. For Martin, the organization provided community, confidence, and leadership opportunities. Students of color at predominantly white institutions (PWIs) often encounter cultural isolation, unconscious bias, and a lack of representation, challenges the Brotherhood addresses through mentorship, professional development and leadership programming. “We want to display excellence and leadership on campus,” Martin said. More than a club, Berry Brotherhood is a space where members feel seen, uplifted, and empowered.

Chloe Scholl, president of the Asian American Pacific Islander Student Group (AAPI), explained that many cultural organizations operate under the Office of Belonging and Community Engagement. “Each club is different, but we’re all working toward the same goals of inclusion and support,” she said. The office provides guidance and support to these groups

by helping them build community.

Despite their importance, these organizations face hidden challenges. “We’re often left off emails, our events aren’t on the calendar and we’re not included on the stall wall,” said Kris Williams, president of the Black Student Association (BSA). BSA exists to provide a judgment-free space for Black students and students of color but gaps in communication made it difficult to plan events and feel recognized on campus. Williams learned the systems on her own and recruited friends to fill officer roles, effectively turning BSA into a self-created support system. Limited recognition also affects member retention. “Towards the end of last semester, attendance was really low, sometimes only three or four people showed up,” said Lily Chapman, president of Empower, the women and gender studies club. As many club leaders are upperclassmen, concerns about sustainability grow as graduation approaches. “I’m concerned there aren’t enough underclassmen to keep the club running after I graduate,” Chapman said.

Emma Simmons, president of LISTEN, Berry’s LGBTQIA+ club, echoed the challenge. “We have a big surge at the beginning of the year, and then it drops as time goes on,” she said. For many leaders, these organizations

are communities they have nurtured, making the possibility of decline emotionally significant. Without intentional mentorship, the momentum built by upperclassmen risks fading after they leave, threatening the clubs’ longevity.

To address this, some organizations have turned to purposeful mentorship. “Our upperclassmen officers have kind of adopted the freshmen and sophomores,” said Martin. “So essentially, they are all our brothers.” The Brotherhood’s “big brother-little brother” model emphasizes close, familial relationships across class years. Mentorship is a genuine and con-



Quanah Martin, Senior



Students gather at Berry Circle on campus

stant aspect that they hope to express.

Others have turned to collaboration. “We partner with other clubs under the Office of Belonging and Community Engagement to support our other minorities,” said Scholl. These partnerships allow groups to share resources, promote one another’s events and build solidarity. “Last semester LISTEN reached out to Empower, and we did a joint meeting together,” said Chapman. In a campus environment where visibility and understanding can be limited, working together helps these organizations push back against isolation and foster a more inclusive culture.

Harmful perceptions and cultural discomfort continue to fuel misconceptions about several organizations. “There are a lot of things that Black people say that people aren’t comfortable hearing,” said Williams. “I want BSA to be known as a safe place where you can express yourself the way you would at home. We’re not just loud and ghetto. I’m trying to fight those stereotypes.”

LISTEN, faces similar misunderstandings. “We’re not recognized as a queer advocacy group, we’re seen more as a social club,” said Simmons. She added that rumors about exclusion have misrepresented the group’s mission. “Even within the LGBTQ community, there is internalized homophobia, internalized transphobia. We’re here for people who haven’t come out yet, who are afraid, who are still figuring out who they are. We won’t passively sit back and let bad things grow.”

Despite their inclusive missions, misconceptions about who is welcome persist. “A lot of people think you can’t join AAPI

if you’re not Asian, and that’s not true,” said Scholl, “we love allies too.” Leaders across organizations stressed that their events are meant to educate and build understanding across cultures. “Empower welcomes everyone,” said Chapman. “At the end of the day, it’s really just a safe space for anyone on campus.”

Through their events, leaders say the impact of these organizations often lies in small but meaningful acts of care. Hamoui recalled a speaker Orgullo hosted during a particularly difficult time for immigrant communities. The speaker distributed red cards outlining immigrants’ rights, which students were encouraged to share with their families. Hamoui expressed her surprise, and her pride, when realizing they could make even the tiniest difference in a household of immigrants who are really struggling.

For Williams, BSA provided both community and freedom. “I don’t have to filter my words or act a different way,” she said. These reflections underscore how cultural organizations serve as spaces of identity, safety and fulfillment, not just extracurriculars. Looking ahead, Simmons hopes LISTEN’s impact will last beyond any single group of leaders. “This isn’t just a year-by-year thing,” she said. “It’s something that I hope has a legacy that surpasses when we graduate.”



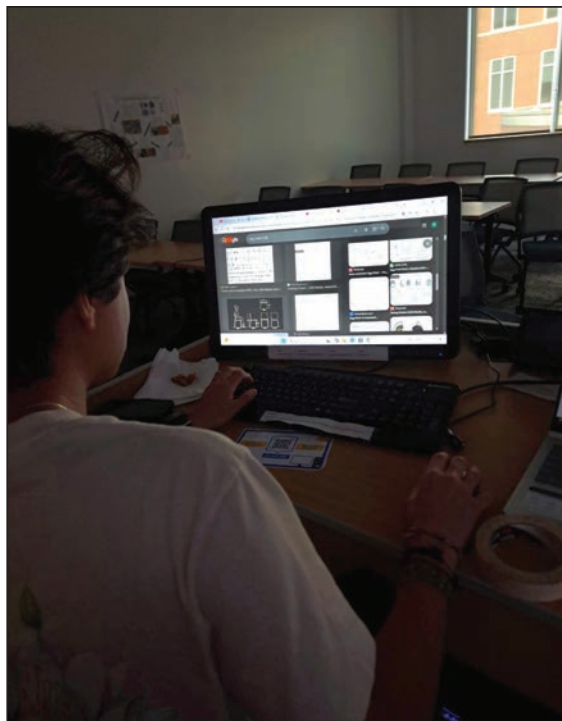
The SHPE is Sailing

How Berry College's Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers is paving the way, one robot at a time

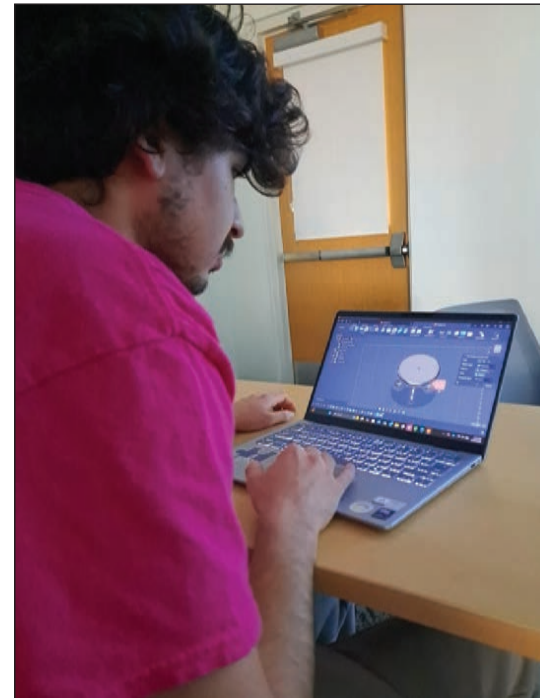
Story and Design by Addie Hill, STEM Editor
Photos Courtesy of Giovanni Cordero, Junior
Graphics by Hayleigh Holcomb,
Graphics Editor



Freshman Cenobio Hanks, Campos and Freshman Katelyn Campbell collaborating on their projects.



Diego Uribe, Junior, researching CAD designs on a PC.



Senior Jake Stout using CAD software for 3D printing.

Summer 2025, Juniors Giovanni Cordero and Asiel Castillo Campos embarked on a new adventure to bring the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) to Berry. As a national organization, SHPE sets out to provide opportunities for Hispanic students to advance in the STEM field with 314 student and professional chapters across America.

Campos had the idea to bring a chapter of this club to Berry when his friends from the University of Georgia (UGA) suggested it. One friend invited Campos to a SHPE National conference, where she presented the idea for an interest in the club in the Rome area. Since UGA has a chapter, Campos's friends thought he would be a great fit to introduce this new opportunity to Berry's vast array of clubs.

Once Campos agreed, then came the next step: obtaining administration approval. Enthused to accept such an organization on campus, Campos and Cordero worked closely with the Office of Student Involvement.

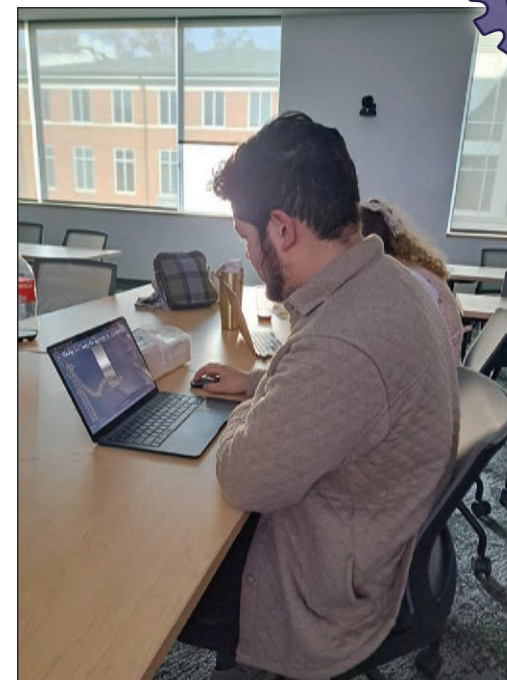


Spring 2025, the two club leaders set out to draft a constitution and work with a faculty advisor to formally bring SHPE to Berry. Once the constitution was created, Campos and Castillo spent the summer forming club procedures and testing the waters of new club leadership.

By Fall 2025, SHPE commenced its official role as a Berry club, with Campos as the President and Cordero as Vice President. The club meets every second Friday of the month to test out fun projects and teach members new engineering skills. For example, their February meeting consisted of creating air cannons and launching objects in the field next to Morgan-Deerfield. This proved a successful way to increase club interest, as multiple people stopped by to learn more.

Since SHPE is a first-year club, Cordero and Campos desire to increase their campus outreach and involvement. Cordero became the club's President this semester and stepped into a greater role as Campos serves as Vice President. He voiced hopes of drawing more attendants to the club so it will continue once the two graduate.

"I plan to really get involved with Orgullo because they're the biggest Hispanic club here and so I need to get involved with them somehow. Next semester is definitely my goal if not the next semester before I leave and I want to get more freshmen or sophomores involved so I can pass the torch to them because I don't want this to die," Cordero said.



Campos participating in the March SHPE meeting activity.



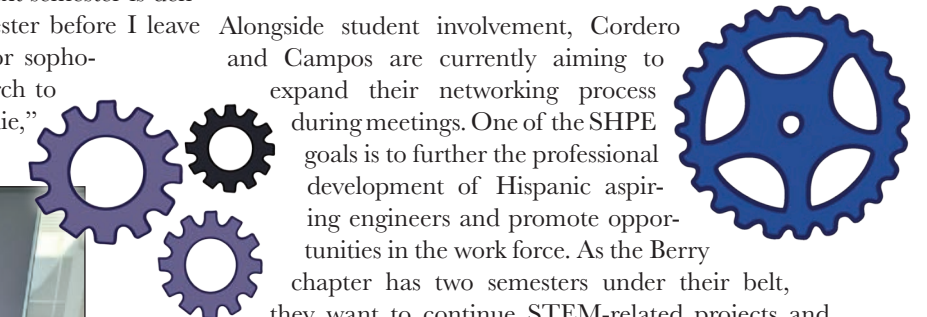
Uribe collaborating with another student utilizing CAD software.

Alongside student involvement, Cordero and Campos are currently aiming to expand their networking process during meetings. One of the SHPE goals is to further the professional development of Hispanic aspiring engineers and promote opportunities in the work force. As the Berry chapter has two semesters under their belt, they want to continue STEM-related projects and increase professional assistance for students.

The past two semesters have proved a journey for Castillo and Campos as they navigated the ins-and-outs of forming a club at Berry. Their passion and excitement for SHPE remains evident in the sentiment they both hold for the club and the impact it has had on them. The two stress that though SHPE may seem geared for Hispanic engineering students, anyone can join the club to learn more about STEM. As they sailed through their first year of leadership, they are hopeful for the future and what it holds for their club.

"You just never know where the opportunity is going to take you and I'm glad I did because I got to meet a lot of cool people, like our advisor for Berry SHPE, all the officers. We have a good time. We have a lot of laughs. You just never know where you're going to find yourself," Campos said.

Campos and Cordero displayed model bravery and leadership this past year with the beginning of SHPE. They are an astounding example of student determination and what happens when taking a chance.



Story by Bailey Casey, Writer
Design by Addie Hill, STEM Editor
Photos by Sydney Martinez, Photographer
Graphics by Hayleigh Holcomb, Graphics Editor

In Fall 2025, Berry College's first Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) rat lab took place. Thom Ratkos, professor of ABA and Psychology, said that he worked and taught with rats during his graduate years and wanted to bring the experience to Berry since he first arrived.

"I always thought that was a good way to learn a science, to have a lab where students are able to see the concepts and principles they're learning about and see them hands-on. To do it themselves," he said.

Ratkos goes on to say that psychology, and more specifically ABA, should have a lab course just like any other Biology or Chemistry class would, because the foundational understanding of applied learning translates all the same. Junior Animal Science major, Amelia Grant, agreed.

"My favorite part [of the lab] was getting to work hands-on with an actual animal. Because it is one thing to be learning about different principles of how animals respond to different stimuli and learn in the classroom, but then actually getting to work with an animal where you have real constraints is motivating," she said. Grant is creating her own major in the study of Animal Behavior, intending to work with larger marine mammals with an interest in animal training, so she reached out to Ratkos because of his experience with rat labs and behavioral conditioning.

Ratkos said that it was this interest from Grant and fellow student Octavia Strunk that pushed him to lobby for the creation of this lab experience, noting that their needs as students were not being met by the current Psychology and ABA curriculum. After proposing the idea, Ratkos said he was met with overwhelming support from not only the Dean of the Charter School of Education and Human Sciences, Alan Hughes, but also the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences, the Biology department, the Institutional Ani-

mal Care and Use Committee and Berry's Development Committee. They offered lab space, help developing protocols and gave institutional grants to assist in his efforts in creating this experience for students.

Once the students, Grant, Strunk and two senior ABA students who were invited to participate got into the lab, they started a progression of actions to help teach the rats certain behaviors. First, getting the rats acclimated to the students handling them. Then the rats get placed in a Skinner Box, which is a controlled environment with things like a lever and a light that are used to train the rats' behavior. The rats learn to do processes of behavior, like pressing a lever, turning on a light or pulling a chain, to be rewarded with drops of water. Then the students moved into their own projects to train the rats to exhibit their own behaviors. Grant trained her rat to pick up a sword with its mouth and Strunk worked to train her rat to play tic-tac-toe. Grant said that this lab experience helped teach her patience with animals when training them and what real-life practice looks like in this field of work because this was her first time attempting to train an animal. Grant said that she sees great potential in this course and highly recommends it.

Ratkos said that he hopes that he can expand this course and one day have it integrated into the ABA curriculum. He wants to one day partner with the Creative Technologies majors and have equipment built for the students' use by students themselves. Most importantly, Ratkos said he wants students to know that the rats are very sweet animals and that they were well taken care of during their time in the lab. The four rats have been adopted out to students and Ratkos said he is very proud of the adoption protocol they were able to put in place for these loving animals.

Ah, Rats!



Students interacting with rats Havok (left) and Frisbee (right) for leisure.

Rats Pinky (left) and The Brain (right) in their cage as students prepare for their lab.

The Colors of Chromatography

Story and Design by Addie Hill,
STEM Editor
Photos by Sydney Martinez,
Photographer



Components of spinach leaf pigments on chromatography paper.

In a
single word,
chromatography
is separation.

Bryan Hettick

Berry students in the Principle of Cell Biology (BIO 111) laboratory performed a paper chromatography experiment to take a closer look at spinach leaves in March. The practice of chromatography spans across biochemistry fields, allowing researchers to separate complex mixtures into parts.

“So, [paper] chromatography takes and separates things out. A complex mixture of molecules that have subtle differences in size and in solubilities. So, they will be separated out by size on paper that is wicking up a chemical, an ether, that will solubilize and remove them from the cocktail that they’re mixed in. When the spinach leaf is concentrated there’s a whole pot of a variety of things in there, but as this ether gets wicked up on the paper, things go with it and the smallest things go first and go fastest and farthest,” Professor of Biology Michael Morgan said.

According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), there are two actors of chromatography: the mobile phase and the stationary phase. These two phases interact, in which the mobile phase essentially passes through the stationary component to leave the performer with a specific part or parts of the original compound.



A student in BIO 111 lab rubs spinach leaf pigments onto chromatography paper.



A student dipping their spinach paper into a solvent so the individual pigments separate.

There are numerous types of chromatography, including planar, gas, partition and more. However, at Berry, freshmen students taking BIO 111 or CHEM 109 typically use paper chromatography.

This specific type of chromatography utilizes cellulose paper to separate specific pigments or dyes. Performers of this experiment roll a coin over a plant, typically a spinach leaf, and then roll the coin over the paper so the pigment transfers over. Then, the paper is dipped into a specific solvent; the different pigments that make up the green color will then appear on the paper. Once this experiment is completed, students can visualize the different colors and components within the green pigment.

“So you’ll see chlorophyll A, which is a kelly green, chlorophyll B, which is more of an olive green. Then we’ll see xanthophylls, which are yellow, and carotenoids, which are orange. What we’re showing students is that all these pigments are within the leaf, and that’s why leaves change in the winter,” Associate Professor of Biology Christopher Hall said.

While chromatography is prominently utilized in the biology scene at Berry, it is also widely practiced in the chemistry field. Students in CHEM 109 will utilize paper

chromatography to separate pigments in dye. However, students journeying on the chemistry route will use other types of this practice, namely gas chromatography. As students learn analytical forms of chromatography, they will begin to use specialized instruments, for example, High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) and Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (GCMS).

Overall, the practice of chromatography at Berry greatly prepares students in the biology and chemistry fields. As chromatography is a broad practice, widely used across biochemical purposes, numerous professions utilize it for gaining deeper knowledge at parts of a whole. The biology and chemistry classes at Berry beneficially develop this skill set in students who aspire future careers in these fields.

“I will say that chromatography is very much an industry standard. It’s something that our students, when they go into the workforce, if they’re in any kind of chemistry setting, they are very, very likely to use some kind of chromatography. I would say the same for the biology students. And I would also say the same for animal science,” Visiting Lecturer of Analytical Chemistry Bryan Hettick said.

Faith in the Flora and Fauna



Story and Design by Addie Hill, STEM Editor
Photos by Sydney Martinez, Photographer

College Chapel.

Historically, religion and science have held a complicated relationship. For instance, Christian thoughts regarding the creation of the universe have historically opposed Darwinian ideals of evolution. Other religious traditions, such as Buddhism, hold sacred attitudes towards the natural world as well. These examples shed light on only a fraction of the diverse ways different religious traditions regard facets of scientific belief. While addressing environmentalism and nature, separate religious practices may respond dissimilarly to modern methodical notions. At Berry, this diversity is seen in the different personal faiths and beliefs of the students and faculty.

Assistant Professor of Environmental Science and Studies at Berry Adrienne Ernst delves into her views on the coexistence of science and religion. While Ernst herself does not identify with a specific religious tradition, her classes have provided profound environments to watch her students explore their own faith through scientific study.

“I think that as people have kind of explored their religion or faith, kind of the core, they find that science and religion actually are not inconsistent with each other and that science can help us to appreciate more of creation in the way that the world came to be. And so, I think that it’s awesome that we live in this time where you can, it’s not like an either or. When I was growing up, there were a lot of people, who felt that there was a lot more tension, if you wanted to be a scientist, like, you couldn’t be a Christian. I don’t think that’s true,” Ernst said.

“I think there are lots of fantastic scientists who are also very devout. Restoration is, I think, inherently optimistic field, because we’re looking at how we can improve things, and so I think there are a number of people who feel called through creation care and stewardship of the earth.”

The typical Christian and Jewish worldview consists of creationism: the belief that God created the world. Christian Scriptural beliefs have conflicting views, such as the End-Times Apathy Hypothesis, which Arizona State University Faculty Associate Robert Fuller defines as anti-environmentalism attitudes held by Christians due to a theological belief of a new Heaven and Earth. There also exists the idea of stewardship, as explained by David M. Rhoads, professor of New Testament at Lutheran School of Theology. A commonly held Christian belief is because God created the world and commanded humans to have dominion over it, this must mean we are to take care of the Earth rather than destroy it. There is a fundamental idea that when humans care for the Earth it is worship to Yahweh.

These are only a couple of facets in the continuum of Christian thought. Conversely, Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy David Barr shares how his upbringing informed both his attitudes toward his faith and his science. Growing up as a Christian, Barr’s father was also an environmentalist, which allowed him to see connections between the environment and his personal faith in deeply interwoven ways.

“My earliest interest in science was as a way of learning to appreciate the handiwork of God in order to know God better,” Barr said. “It wasn’t just a class I took at school, I was learning science from these passionate scientists, just trying to walk around my house. Outside I was learning to identify the plants and animals in the forest where I grew up. They would talk about it as Genesis two, Adam’s command from

God to name the animals. That this is just what scientists are doing when they discover new plant and animal species, that this is a way of carrying on this basic human task of knowing and naming and relating to the created order, as our primary vocation as a species is to know God through what God made.”

Barr’s view takes on a fundamental trust in both his faith and science as a way to explore aspects of philosophy. This is echoed throughout other religious traditions, such as Islam,

which believes in Allah’s creation of the world. Director of the Islamic foundation for Ecology and Environmental Science Fazlun M. Khalid identifies four principles that relate Islam to environmentalism: unity, creation, balance and responsibility. Nature is sacred to Islamic belief because of the connection between the world around us and the Islamic god. Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy Kathryn Heidelberger has academic expertise in Islamic studies, while her personal faith identifies with Christianity. She shares the beliefs



A leather-bound English Standard Version Bible.

of Islamic thought regarding environmentalism and how the two intersect.

“There is definitely an awareness and attention paid to how a person interacts with everything around them, whether that be people or the world, creation, family, citizens. There’s an awareness that everything a person does, carries a kind of moral significance. So there’s an understanding in Islam, that human beings were created by God with a specific purpose and intention to be God’s representatives on earth. And so this gets interpreted in lots of different ways in the tradition, but there, there very much is this sense that, to be a human being is to have been created with purpose to represent God and God’s revelation and God’s intentions for humanity,” Heidelberger said.

These ideas of environmentalism relating to specific deities contrast with other religious ideas of the sacredness of nature. For example, Buddhist thought places high regard on the natural world and those living in it. There is a belief that Earth is composed of fundamental elements: earth, wind, water, fire and space — and life is also evolved from these elements. It is because of this relationship that there is an innate connection between humanity and the environment.

Professor of Religious Studies Jeffrey Lidke, who personally identifies as a Buddhist, explains his own religious faith and its connection to the environment. He mentions commonalities between scientific and Buddhist thought, which Professor of Accounting at Purdue University Otto Chang echoes in his journal article “Buddhism and Scientific Methods.”

“As I dove more into the Buddhist tradition, which I was starting to identify with at that time in my life, I saw at the heart of the Buddhist tradition was Siddhartha Gautama, or the historical Buddha’s own way of pursuing truth, which was in sync with the ideals of the scientific method. Basically being interested in learning and understanding and testing one’s theses about reality through direct observation, and not restricted to any kind of doctrinal presuppositions.” Lidke said.



Photo courtesy of Campbell Thomas, Sophomore
Students talking outside of College Chapel at the 2025-26 College Church kickoff.



Berry Buddhist Studies Group participating in yoga and breathing exercises during a club meeting.



Photo courtesy of Campbell Thomas, Sophomore
Students standing in line for T-shirts at the College Church 2025-26 kickoff.

The Berry Buddhist Studies Group houses a variety of attendants who practice Buddhism to further understand tradition. Meeting on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. in the Interfaith Center — located in the East Mary complex — the group typically dives into a religious discussion, followed by practices such as yoga and meditation. Junior Izzac Rumble, club President, mentioned the importance of his spirituality during group discussion.

“I realized early on that this was the right college to go to. I really can’t see myself being in a city, surrounded by all this chaos. That’s why I appreciate so much of the land that we have access to here — that’s definitely been one of the big reasons that’s made me keep following this spiritual path, all of that exposure. It’s so amazing, all of the deer walking around everywhere. I never really saw that growing up where I lived, in the suburbs. So this is a really good place to create those connections again with the natural environment, with the plant life but also the animals.” Rumble said.

The idea of an interconnectedness between humanity and nature is a paralleled theme across numerous Asian religious traditions and spans various practices in response to this idea. In broad terms, the idea of human-nature unity can be described as animism, which Senior Lecturer in the Anthropology of Religion at Kings College London Kathrine Swancutt defines as a concept of engaging with the world and the life forms that inhabit it.

“A general theme across Asian traditions — Buddhist, Hindu, Taoist, Confucian, Shinto — and we can get into specifics with any of them, but they are all exhibiting a similar pattern to what we’re also seeing in Indigenous traditions, which is there is this inclination to think holistically and to view us as inseparably connected to the environment... [Animism is] a theme that’s strong in the Shinto tradition, and we also definitely see that in Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist as well, this idea of these living beings who are associated with the natural world, and



in those various traditions, that as they all have histories in which individuals are encountering the reality of environmental degradation in their respective lands, and then turning to that kind of spirituality as a way to call upon the members of their own community to be mindful of how we are taking care of the natural world,” Lidke said.

Of course, reverence for the environment is not confined to a specific religious tradition; anyone can hold a significance of the world around us without identifying with a faith. For instance, Senior Liana Mitchell does not believe one particular tradition, but she still expresses complex views on Earth. Taking REL 100 with Lidke this semester has broadened her view of her own spirituality and the environment.

“I believe that there’s no way for me to know for sure about anything. So I don’t really feel like I have business in knowing. And I don’t think that you need to be following religion to live life with kindness and empathy... I didn’t think I was a spiritual person, but if you’re thinking about it in the tense of how you view life and its purpose and everything, I would say that nature definitely plays a big role in it because I like the view of a lot of indigenous religions where they say that like, all living beings are one. There’s like a creator who is the universe in a lot of traditions and the mother who is the Earth. And that plays into my spirituality, just respecting nature and looking forward to what is coming next with it.” Mitchell said.

Students and faculty express their religious views in numerous ways under many faith traditions and spiritual ideals, yet there has been a common factor throughout the diversity: a respect for nature. Whether the ideas stem from a belief of a divine creator, or simply an individual respect for the environment’s beauty, Berry provides a home for myriad beliefs and the outdoor sights to explore these in a deeper way.



Freshman Abby Elle reading a Bible outside of McAllister Hall.

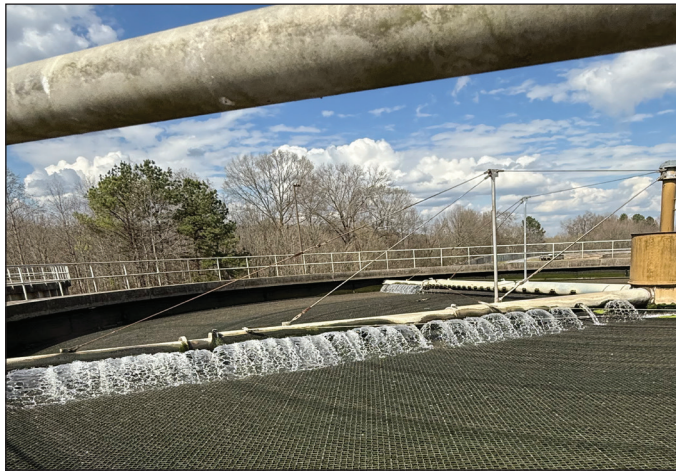
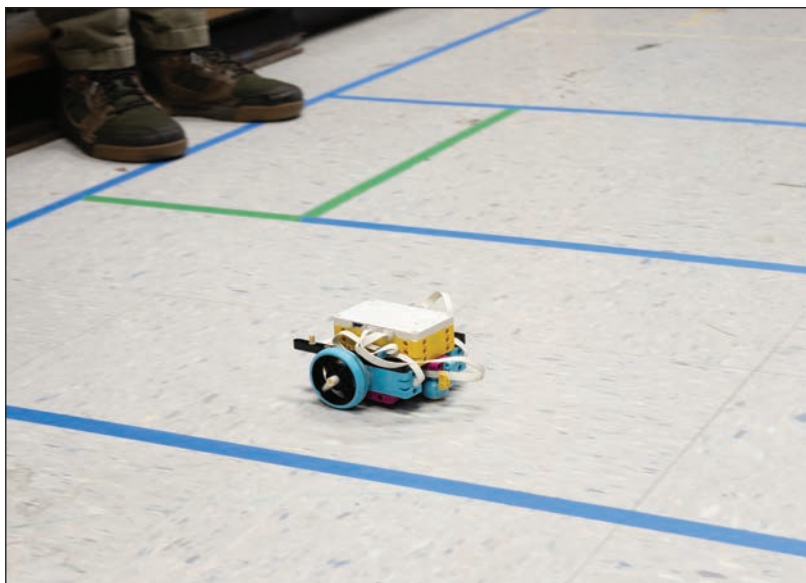


Photo courtesy of Abby Elle, Freshman
An Introduction to Environmental Science (ESS 104) lab at the Rome Water Reclamation Facilities.



Photo courtesy of Addie Hill, STEM Editor
Berry's greenhouse, frequented by Introduction to Agriculture Science (ANS 105) lab students.



A robot from the Introduction to Engineering (EGR 101) robot lab.

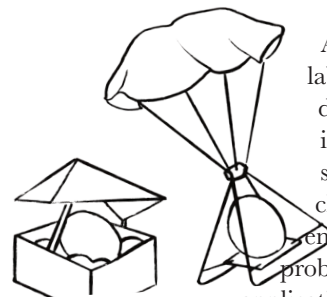
Lab Life:

Story by Carolina Mendoza,
Editor-in-Chief

Design by Addie Hill, STEM Editor

Photos by Sydney Martinez,
Photographer

Graphics by Hayleigh Holcomb, Graphics
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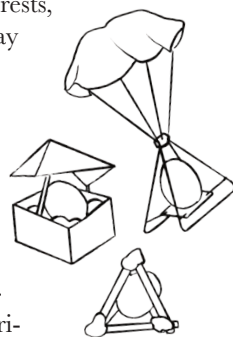


At Berry, introductory science labs are designed to get students doing science, not just hearing about it. From their first semester, students have the chance to step into labs that emphasize hands-on learning, problem-solving and real-world application. Instead of only listening to lectures, they practice the scientific method — asking questions, forming hypotheses, running experiments and analyzing results. They learn to collect data, build graphs, recognize patterns and draw conclusions, all while gaining experience with tools like microscopes and other lab equipment.

These courses also build soft skills. Group experiments and lab reports push students to communicate clearly, collaborate and think critically as a team. What sets Berry's intro labs apart is the campus itself. With forests, streams and wildlife just steps away from classroom buildings, the college functions as what professors call a "living lab." Students regularly leave the lab bench to collect samples outdoors, observe ecosystems and study natural environments firsthand.

Assistant Professor of Environmental Science Studies Adrienne Ernst, Ph.D., said many students arrive with a narrow idea of what environmental science means.

"A lot of people come into the class and think environmental science is just about recycling ... but it's so broad," Ernst said. "If you're interested in economics, if you're interested in history, if you're interested in chemistry ... no matter what you're interested in, there's a way the environment intersects with that, and that's good to know going into the intro courses."



Where Discovery Begins

Alongside outdoor fieldwork, students also participate in traditional experiments. In biology labs, they examine cells under microscopes. In chemistry, they conduct reactions and measure outcomes. In physics, they test physical properties and design working systems.

Assistant Professor of Physics Zachary Lindsey, Ph.D., said the goal is to help students approach problems from multiple angles.

"The labs in the intro courses are trying to provide students with the opportunities to problem solve using different approaches," Lindsey said. "We have robot-based labs, which try to get students to exercise design, and we have more physical building labs. Students are given the freedom to navigate and create different solutions."

That freedom often surprises first-year students, who may not expect to design experiments or build working models so early in their college careers. Some are even introduced to early research opportunities, working with professors or beginning to explore their own scientific questions before taking advanced courses.

For freshman psychology major Mercy Kise, her experience in Intro to Agriculture felt familiar but eye-opening.

"I enjoyed the course," Kise said. "There was a lot of things I grew up around, so getting to learn about our environment and the names of things or their measurements or why they do things a certain way is really cool."

By connecting classroom concepts to tangible experiences, Berry's introductory labs help students build confidence in scientific thinking while discovering how science intersects with their interests. Whether students plan to major in a science field or simply fulfill a requirement, these labs offer an interactive way to understand how the world works.



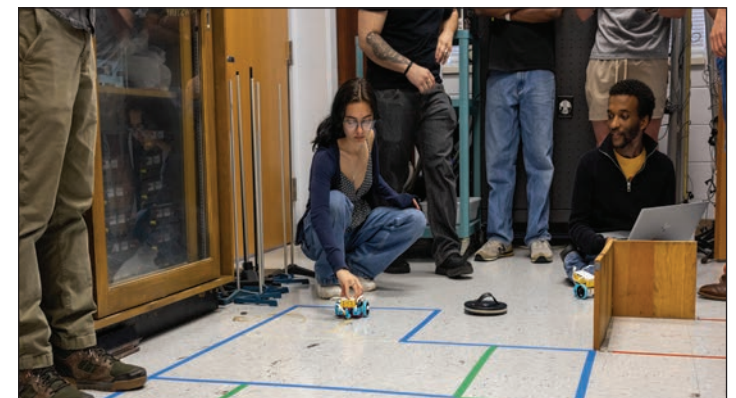
Photo courtesy of Addie Hill, STEM Editor

Sunflower plants from a ANS 105 laboratory experiment.



Photo courtesy of Abby Elle, Freshman

A soil sampling from ESS 104 lab.



Student participating in a robot lab in EGR 101.

FUSION FOODS

FOR INNOVATIVE COOKS

When you think about college student meals, the foods that come to mind are simple, easy and cheap. While this stereotype is rooted in truth, not all college students want to live off of ramen and oatmeal. For students trying to branch out and explore more flavors, a great way to get creative is to fuse two unique recipes together. Food fusions work best with recipes that share the same or complimentary ingredients. For example, both birria and pho share similar aromatics, and butter chicken pairs well with honey.

BIRRIA PHO

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. Beef roast (shoulder or chuck)
- 2 Packets or 4 cubes beef bouillon
- ½ Onion
- 1 Large piece of ginger
- 8 Garlic cloves
- 4 Guajillo peppers
- 1 Ancho pepper
- 2 Arbol peppers
- Rice noodles
- Aromatics: 4 cloves, 4 star anise, 1 tsp. coriander seeds, 2 cinnamon sticks
- Spices: salt, black pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, adobo (all to taste)
- Garnish: bean sprouts, egg, cilantro, green onion
- Flavoring: lemon juice, soy sauce, and/or sriracha

Equipment:

- Large pot/crockpot
- Small pot
- Knife
- Pan
- Blender
- Spice bag/cheese cloth

Instructions:

1. In a large pot, boil the beef roast in 6 cups water for 15 minutes. Skim the foam that rises to the top and discard.
2. Add the beef bouillon to the pot.
3. In a dry pan, toast the onion, ginger, and garlic cloves. Add to the pot. In the same pan, toast the cloves, star anise, coriander pods, cinnamon stick. Add toasted aromatics into a spice bag or cheese cloth, then add to the pot.
4. Set the heat of the main pot to low or transfer the mixture to a crockpot on high to begin simmering.
5. Cut off the tops of the peppers, open them, and scrape out the seeds. In a separate, small pot, boil the deseeded peppers for 15 minutes.
6. Place the softened peppers into a blender along with the garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, salt, and pepper. Blend until smooth, then strain the mixture into your pot.
7. Let the pot/crockpot simmer for 5-6 hours.
8. After simmering, shred the meat.
9. Just before serving, boil the rice noodles until they are soft. If desired, you can boil eggs in the same pot for your garnish.
10. Serve the broth and meat over the noodles and garnish with bean sprouts, egg, cilantro, and/or green onion.
11. Provide lemon juice, soy sauce, and sriracha at the table so everyone can flavor their bowl to their personal tastes.

Pro tip: try adding flavorings to your spoon to make sure you like it before incorporating it into your whole bowl.

Ty'Naijah Jackson, sophomore

Story and Design by Lily Ruppert, Food Editor
Photos by Sydney Martinez, Photographer
Graphics by Hayleigh Holcomb, Graphic Editor

BUTTER CHICKEN AND HONEY-GLAZED ROLLS

Ingredients

For the Bun Dough:

- 2 eggs
- 6 tbsp honey
- 2 tsp or 1 packet instant yeast
- 1 cup milk
- 5 tbsp melted butter
- 3 cups all-purpose or bread flour
- 2 tsp salt

For the Butter Chicken:

- 2 lb. boneless chicken thigh or breast, cubed
- ¾ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 small piece of ginger, mashed
- 6 cloves of garlic, mashed
- ½ onion, chopped
- 14 oz crushed tomato
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 4 tbsp ghee or butter
- 2 tbsp honey
- Spices: 2 tbsp garam masala, 1 tsp paprika, 1 tsp turmeric, 2 tsp chili powder, 2 tsp salt, and black pepper
- Garnish: Milk and/or cilantro

Equipment:

- Large pot/crockpot + small pot
- Knife
- Pan
- Blender
- Spice bag/cheese cloth

Instructions

Honey Rolls:

1. Mix the milk and 4 tbsp honey in a small bowl and microwave until lukewarm. Add the yeast and let it bloom for 5 minutes.
2. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, 1 egg, 3 tbsp butter, and salt. Add the yeast mixture and combine. If the dough is sticky, add 1 tbsp of flour at a time until it can be handled.
3. Knead the dough for 5 minutes, then place it in a covered, oiled dish to rise for 30 minutes.
4. Once doubled in size, separate the dough into 16 equal pieces. Let them rise for another 30 minutes while you preheat your oven to 350°F.
5. Whisk 1 egg and brush over the rolls. Put them in the oven to bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown.
6. Finish by brushing the warm rolls with a mixture of 2 tbsp melted butter and 2 tbsp honey.

Butter Chicken:

1. Cube the chicken and add it to a mixture of ½ cup Greek yogurt, garlic powder, olive oil, garam masala, salt, pepper, paprika, and chili powder. Sear the chicken in a pan on medium-high heat for 5 to 6 minutes. Set the chicken aside.
3. In the same pan, add butter and cook down the onion, ginger, and garlic until soft. Add the crushed tomatoes and spices, allowing the mixture to simmer for 5 minutes.
5. Transfer the tomato mixture to a blender. Add ¼ cup Greek yogurt and honey, then blend until smooth. Pour the sauce back into the pan, add the chicken, and simmer for 5 minutes.
7. Before serving, top with a swirl of milk and fresh cilantro. Use rolls to scoop chicken directly from sauce.

Pro tip: garam masala is hard to find in Rome. In a pinch, garam masala consists of cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, cumin, coriander, black pepper, and nutmeg. Adding small amounts of each of these spices can get you to a very similar flavor profile.

Roxanne Gasana, sophomore

Pro tip: a mini-blender is perfect for college students! They're affordable, easy to store, and lightweight—and you can use them for so many recipes.

Savannah Talley, sophomore

MIXTUP!

with mocktails

Story and Design by Lily Ruppert, Food Editor
Photos by Sydney Martinez, Photographer

Mocktails are perfect way to feel extra special for craft nights, hangouts or even just a much-needed study break--no ID required. What's best about mocktails is how much you can customize them. Though these are tried and true recipes, each ingredient can be swapped out or complimented to make your very own staple drink. How will you mix it up?

cherry cola

Cherry lovers have to try the cherry cola mocktail. This one is simple yet classy. The only ingredients are as follows: drinkers' choice of cola, cranberry juice and maraschino cherries for your garnish. The best ratio is 1:2 cranberry juice to cola. And although any cola will work, Dr Pepper is especially delicious in combination with these flavors. If you're ever looking to ever-so-slightly elevate your D-Hall soda, these ingredients are usually available!

pickletini

Savory enthusiasts: the pickletini is perfect for you. It has an unexpected flavor that will definitely become your staple. The tajin rim adds and extra special kick to an already delicious drink. All you need for this drink are Sprite, pickle juice, tajin, honey and a pickle spear for your garnish. Measurements are really to taste, but you can never go wrong with 1 cup Sprite and 1 cup pickle juice. Using honey to coat the rim makes the tajin stick perfectly, and it brings a little bit of sweetness into this savory delight.

pina colada

Looking for the perfect drink to accompany you at the beach or poolside? Look no further than the virgin piña colada. It will bring the tropics to you with all of its summery flavors. For this drink, you'll need pineapple juice, coconut water, lime juice and sugar for the rim. Sugar sticks easily to a wet rim and makes your drink just that much tastier. This drink is also delicious frozen, in which case you just add a little ice and blend. And if you want to feel a little more special, you can buy tiny umbrellas online and add it to your sweet treat!

strawberry daiquiri

Virgin strawberry daiquiris are the perfect drink for those looking for fresh, summery vibes. Simple, refreshing and aesthetic, this may just be the perfect drink, period. The virgin strawberry daiquiri calls for Sprite or lemonade, strawberries and ice to all be blended together. You can make your drink even cuter with a strawberry slice garnish, lemon wedge garnish--or both if you're feeling extra.



A virgin strawberry daiquiri, a virgin pina colada, a cherry cola mocktail and a pickletini.

Splash Of Citrus

Recipes, Design and Photos by
Cai DeFelice, Asst. Food Editor

- Strawberry And Citrus Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 Limes
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- 1 Lb Strawberries sliced
- 2 Grapefruits
- 2 Navel Oranges
- 2 Blood Oranges

1. Zest and juice limes into a medium bowl
2. Add honey, strawberry slices and mix until evenly covered
3. Cut the tops and bottoms off of the grapefruit, and oranges

4. Cut the peel off following the curve of the fruit, making sure to remove as much white pith as possible

5. Slice the peeled fruit into either 1/4 inch thick slices or bite sized pieces

6. Arrange the citrus on a serving dish and top with strawberries and fresh mint



- Spritz Cookies



Cookie Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 Cups powdered sugar
- 1 Cup unsalted butter
- 1 Large egg
- 1 Teaspoon lemon zest
- 1/2 Teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 1/4 Cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 Teaspoon table salt

Buttercream Ingredients:

- 2 Cups powdered sugar
- 1/2 Cup unsalted butter
- 4 Teaspoons lemon juice
- 1 Teaspoons grenadine

1. Preheat oven to 350 F and line 2 baking sheets with parchment or nonstick paper

2. Mix powdered sugar and butter until fluffy

3. Combine the egg, lemon zest and vanilla with the sugar and butter

4. Add flour and salt, and mix until fully combined

5. Add dough into a piping bag

6. Pipe 1 inch round circles onto the prepared baking sheets

7. Bake cookies for 8-12 minutes or until the bottoms and edges turn golden

1. Mix powdered sugar, butter, lemon juice, and grenadine until combined

2. Transfer buttercream to a piping bag

3. Pipe 1 teaspoon of buttercream per each cookie

- Lemon Posset

Ingredients:

- 2 Lemons
- 3 Cups heavy cream
- 3/4 Cup sugar
- Fresh blueberries
- Fresh Mint

1. Zest and juice lemons, setting aside the juice in a separate bowl

2. In a 5 quart pot, combine heavy cream, sugar and lemon zest over medium-high heat

3. Boil uncovered for 8 minutes while stirring constantly to avoid boiling over

4. Remove from heat and mix in the lemon juice, and let it rest for 20 minutes

5. Strain through a sieve and divide evenly among six glasses or ramekins

6. Cover and cool for 3 to 24 hours

7. Garnish with blueberries and mint



How do you stack it?

Story and Design by Lily Ruppert, Food Editor
Photos by Sydney Martinez, Photographer
Graphics bt Hayleigh Holcomb, Graphic Editor

Life is like a sandwich: there’s no one right way to do it. You have endless options for a personalized experience. However, unlike life, you can remake a sandwich, trying out new combinations until you find what works just right for you. Take this quiz to see what your sub combo says about your personality; choose your favorite options, and whichever letter you have the most of is your personality type.

Bread

Wheat - A
White - B
Gluten-Free - B

Flatbread - C
Herb & Cheese - D

Cheese

American - A
Provolone - B
Pepperjack - C

Cheddar - D
None - D

Protein

Turkey - A
Chicken - A
Ham - B

Meatball - C
Pepperoni - C
Roast Beef - D

Sauce

Mayo - A
Mustard- B
Ranch - B

Vinaigrette - C
Barbeque - D

Order style

The same every time - A
Ask for recommendations - B

Customized on the spot - C
Surprise me - D

Toppings

0 to 2 - A
3 to 4 - B

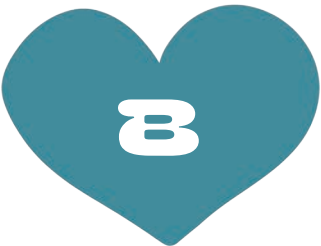
5 to 6 - C
7 or more - D

Toasted

Not toasted - A/B
Toasted - C/D



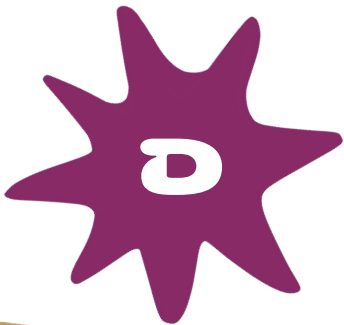
Classic - Consistent and reliable. You gatekeep your favorite chair in the library, don't you?



Overachiever - Loaded sub, loaded schedule. When was the last time you slept well?



Social Butterfly - Huge people-pleaser, easy to get along with, and somehow knows everyone...what's your screentime?



Wildcard - A little too adventurous, but definitely has the best stories because of it. Which building have you broken into?



This or That, Find Out Your Matcha Type

Quiz and Design by Cai DeFelice, Asst. Food Editor
Photos by Sydney Martinez, Photographer

Cool
Colors? **OR** Warm
Colors?

New
Piercing? **OR** New
Tattoo?

Night
Time? **OR** Day
Time?

Ice Cream
Cup? **OR** Ice Cream
Cone?

Silver
Jewelry? **OR** Gold
Jewelry?

Tally Your Answers

Mostly "this"
You are
Vanilla Matcha

Similar Flavors:
Caramel
White Mocha
Cinnamon
Mocha

Mostly "that"
You are
Strawberry
Matcha

Similar Flavors:
Raspberry
Lavender
Blueberry
Peach



Avocado – When seeking out a source of healthy fats, look no further than the avocado. The mono-saturated fats in avocado lower LDL (“bad”) cholesterol, in turn reducing chance of heart disease. Avocado is also rich in potassium, folate, and Vitamins B6, C and E. Avocado is a very flexible side dish, as it pairs well with almost every meal. Common dishes to accompany it are eggs, rice or the ever-popular toast.

Forkful of Protein

Story by Lily Ruppert, Food Editor
Design by Cai DeFelice, Asst. Food Editor
Photos By Sydney Martinez, Photographer

Tuna – A college staple, tuna is the definition of a superfood. Tuna packs just 27 grams of protein in one four-ounce serving and is rich in iron, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin B6, B12 and D. These nutrients contribute to red blood cell production, bone health and immune system strength. They also reduce cardiovascular disease.

Blueberries – Fresh or frozen, blueberries are chock-full of nutrients, making them an incredible sweet treat. Of all common fruits and veggies, blueberries have one of the highest levels of antioxidants. They’re also rich in Vitamins C, K, A and Manganese. So many recipes can be adapted to include blueberries; incorporate them into salads, yogurt bowls or even turn them into a fresh tea or lemonade for a sweet summer drink.

Tofu – Tofu is a strong form of plant-based protein. Three ounces of firm tofu provides nine grams of protein and has high levels of calcium, iron, and vitamin B5. Because it has such a neutral taste, tofu is wholly customizable; it is most commonly tossed into a soup, marinated in a sauce or coated in breading and fried.

Beets – Beets are an underrated veggie, considering their fiber density. They are also a strong source of Vitamin A, C and Iron. Some athletes drink beet juice to improve their performance because the nitrates in beets help your mitochondria produce energy. In general, beets also reduce inflammation. Beets are a fresh addition that can be prepared in any way imaginable.

Egg – Eggs, specifically chicken eggs, are a complete protein source. They have all nine amino acids that humans must consume from other sources. One egg provides about six grams of protein. However, the egg yolk is rich in LDL cholesterol, so it is important to pay mind to your cardiovascular health when determining how often you want to add to your weekly diet. The egg yolk can be removed from the egg and you will still receive four grams of protein per egg. Additionally, eggs can be prepared in a plethora of ways—the classic chef hat has 100 pleats, representing the 100 ways to cook an egg.

Black Beans – Black beans are a classic, hearty food to add to your diet. Half a cup of black beans provides you with eight grams of protein and antioxidants that protect your cells and reduce risk of heart disease. Additionally, they are found to help reduce blood sugar spikes. Beans are very easy to incorporate into basic recipes by blending them into sauces or simply adding it as a topping to existing meals.



Eat Good Feel Good Look Good

Story by Grace Feenstra, Health & Fitness Editor
Photos by Jessie Martinez, Photographer
Graphics by Anabel Flores, Graphic Artist



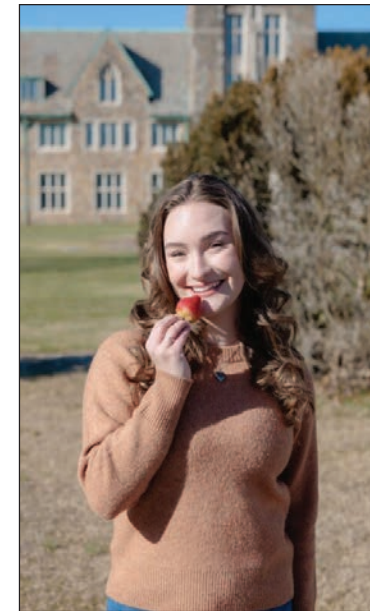
Freshman Makayla Cortez posing with orange slices in front of Ford



The common phrase “food is fuel” that is passed around when people are trying to get fit and stay healthy. A healthy diet is key for trying to achieve this goal. What if it does more than just fuel your body? What if it also helps your looks, mood and energy? Certain foods contain vitamins that can help maintain glowing skin, a balanced mood, and a higher energy level.

For instance, green tea it is a natural source of caffeine and contains a healthy amount of caffeine. An average green tea beverage contains 35 milligrams, which is the perfect amount for a morning or mid-day pick up. This can cause a happier mood and bring a calm feeling to those who drink it. Not only is it a perfect energy and mood booster, but that same caffeine can help reduce darkness and puffiness underneath your eyes. The antioxidants in the tea bags also fight inflammation, which can improve skin tone and texture.

The fruits oranges, strawberries and blueberries contain similar benefits. Oranges help with energy, mood and skin. Due to their high levels of vitamin C, oranges brighten up the skin and boosts collagen which helps firm the skin. Through natural sugars and fiber, they are another great source of energy that can last all day. The scent that comes off of an orange can reduce stress levels and induces a calming state. Vitamin C boosts neurotransmitters such as dopamine and serotonin which combats depression. Freshman, Paige Crookes said that she does notice a mood boost after consuming such as oranges. “I notice that after I eat fresh fruits and vegetables my mood drastically increases,” said Crookes. “Knowing that I am eating something that taste good and helps my skin makes me want to continue this healthy habit.”



Holding a strawberry about to take a bite

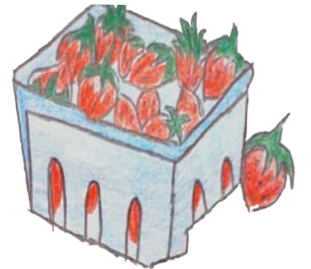


Holding some blueberries for a snack



Holding a green tea bag over her eye

Strawberries contain antioxidants that regulate serotonin (the happy chemical) and boost mood soon after they are eaten. Not only does it regulate the serotonin levels, but strawberries also help with inflammation of joints which in return makes the body feel more at balance and less stiff. Ever feel sore after a workout? Have some strawberries! The same chemical also helps calm inflamed muscles after a hard workout. This is due to the high levels of anthocyanins and vitamin C.



Blueberries contain natural sugars that turn left-over carbs into long-lasting energy. Which can help reduce brain fog and provide energy throughout the day. So, in the morning try adding blueberries to your cereals or oatmeal or just have a few. They also contain vitamins A, C, E and natural salicylic acid which combats breakouts, premature aging and brightens skin complexion.



Hydration plays a huge role in a healthy diet but can also be enhanced by adding fruits and vegetables into your water. This infuses the water with the additional vitamins from the fruits and vegetables. The most common combination being cucumbers and lemons. They provide benefits for the skin by decreasing inflammation puffiness. It also helps boost your metabolism without unhealthy sugars and an over amount of caffeine. Laura Quillen believes that hydration played a key role in helping her skin health. Possible more than the food she eats. “I noticed the main change in my skin after I made hydration a priority.”

So not only is food necessary for daily living, but the right food can help you be happier, have higher energy levels and healthier skin. With the addition of making hydration a priority, your skin will never have been more thankful.



Brain Breaks

Story by Katelyn Wilburn, Managing Editor

Photos by Jessie Martinez, Photographer

Graphics by Anabel Flores, Graphic Artist

Burn out is very common for college students and seems to always hit us at the worst time of the semester. When the exhaustion hits, it is difficult to even get out of bed. But burnout can be extremely stressful, as there is a lot on the plate of college students. How do we effectively decrease the amount of burn out we endure?

There are many ways to recharge during the busiest times of your week. Brain breaks are a simple way to feel energized and more productive, even when taking a little time to yourself. Meditation, journaling and other easy habits are great ways to minimize burn out.

Meditation has been around for thousands of years, used not only as a relaxation technique but also as spiritual practice. The American Psychological Association (APA) explains that mindfulness focuses in on two key concepts: attention and acceptance. Attention is about being present in the moment, while acceptance involves contentment with thoughts and feelings you have so you can let go the frustrations you might hold over them.

“Mindfulness classes and mindfulness-based therapies provide the tools to put those concepts into practice,” APA said. “Such programs might include breathing exercises, yoga, and guided lessons to help you become aware of your body sensations, thoughts, and feelings.”

Meditation isn't simply practiced in therapy and courses, it is a discipline that is easy to work individually. Just taking five minutes to sit down, close your eyes and practice your breathing is meaningful and quickly accomplished. There are thousands of videos of

YouTube, TikTok and other social media platforms that are educational on the different forms of meditation and relaxation.

Journaling is another great way to spend your time when not focused on work. Sitting down to write your thoughts, maybe even listening to

some peaceful music while doing so, is a great way to keep your mind organized. Spill out all the emotions from the day. You could even write down some goals you have for the month. Just being able to release the impending concerns that weigh in your mind can help you focus back on the things that are in the present moment.

A great way to start is by picking up the Five-Minute Journal. Even morning and night, it gives prompts to assist you in your journey of self-reflection, giving you a chance to let out anger or show off gratitude.

Journaling never has to attend to a rigid schedule or a structured format. Maybe just pick out a simple notebook and get to writing. Freshman Addison Butler can attest to this, as being on the journaling journey has opened her eyes to the beauty of its simplicity. She has noticed that just titling her entries with silly phrases brings her a joy she hadn't found elsewhere.

“I like being able to remember what happened that day and give it a fun title,” Butler said.

Butler's method of titling her hard days with a happy connotation helps her turn the bad days into funny memories. Even going back to read about a hard day can feel different when there was a positive spin placed on it.

If meditation or journaling aren't your vibe, that's okay as well. There are other habits such as reading, playing music, drawing, writing, pottery and other art forms that help with your expression. Inward reflection channels your anxiety or other emotions into a healthier format. Freshman Laikyn Rhodes uses art as an escape to center herself from negative thoughts. When creating new art, she is able to control her body and hands in a scenario that makes her feel at ease.

“Working with something like clay that I have to use my hands for allows me to center myself in my art,” Rhodes said. “Which overall helps with my mental health.”

Taking these kinds of breaks helps to decrease stress and maintain a calmer mindset. By staying relaxed, you are able to maximize your times of rest and effectively get back to studying. So as life becomes more chaotic, remember there is peace in taking time for yourself. Small breaks in the day can help you do just that.



Books are a great way to take time to yourself but also keep your mind active.



Coloring is a simple activity that everyone can do and is a great way to take a breather.

TRACKING TECH

Story by Grace Feenstra, Health & Fitness Editor and Jina Hughes, Asst. Health & Fitness Editor
Photos by Jessie Martinez, Photographer
Graphics by Anabel Flores, Graphic Artist

Over the years, different variations of fitness trackers have been produced. All with the same goal in mind, track the fitness of an individual and help motivate them to achieve their fitness goals. Recently the added bonus of being able to text and answer calls. The main three being Apple, Garmin, and the Oura Ring. Each has their own benefits and weaknesses. Multiple versions with multiple benefits have been released. Each model hopefully better than the last. Different types of people prefer each one for different reasons.

The Apple Watch works only with iPhones. It tracks heart rate, steps, sleep, workouts, standing time, exercise time and some apps from your phone can be transferred over to be used on your watch. You can answer calls and texts on this watch, which is a major benefit of it and something that you cannot do on some other watches.

WHICH IS BEST FOR YOU?

APPLE WATCH



Apple Watch displaying movement, exercise and standing each color coded for easy tracking

GARMIN WATCH



A Garmin displaying steps and heart rate only on of its many features

OURA RING



Oura Ring being worn comfortably on a student's hand

The Garmin Watch works with all types of phones and will notify you when you are getting a text or call. You can answer a call but depends on the model of the watch. Much like the Apple watch, it can track steps, workouts, sleep and heart rate. It also tracks “body battery” which is your body’s energy levels and stress levels. Which can be helpful to know when playing workouts for the day.



The Oura Ring is newer to the fitness tracking industry and has something else that Apple and Garmin can not offer, it is not a watch. This highly advanced ring works with all phones and uses an app to show tracked data. The ring tracks sleep stages, heart rate, skin temperature, workouts, steps and stress. This is a perfect fit for someone who does not want to wear a bulky watch. It comes in normal jewelry colors. Including black, gold, rose gold and silver. This ring comes in all different sizes allowing for a comfortable and perfect fit for all. w

Whether you need something to track a harsh workout or a simple walk, these devices can help. From watch to ring, you can choose a variety of styles and colors. With this information, you are able to choose which fitness tracker is best for you and your health goals.

KEEP IT UNDERCOVER: POTS, THE HIDDEN ILLNESS

Story by Grace Feenstra, Editor Health & Fitness and Jina Hughes, Asst. Health & Fitness Editor
Photos by Jessie Martinez, Photographer
Graphics by Anabel Flores, Graphic Artist

Postural Orthostatic Tachycardic Syndrome (POTS) is a chronic illness that is spreading across the young adult population. Mainly affecting young women, this illness causes lightheadedness, dizziness upon standing, a fast heart rate when changing positions from laying/sitting down to standing up, extreme exhaustion and so much more. These symptoms affect daily life and make it hard for people who suffer from POTS to have a normal day.

“My symptoms definitely vary from day to day,” Freshman Lylah O’Barr said. “The most prominent ones are that my heart rate is typically in the 95 - 105 bpm range even when I am not doing very demanding or extensive physical activity, lightheadedness, headaches and fatigue.”

These symptoms can have a severe impact on day-to-day life. O’Barr has more worries about her days than others who do not suffer from POTS.

“It affects me most when I feel sick or I am participating in physical activity. i often feel anxious that I may pass out or become a disturbance to others,” O’Barr said.

While there is no permanent cure, there are precautions that can be taken. Electrolytes and salt chews are a great source of sodium, which many who suffer from POTS need more of. Getting at least one hundred ounces of water daily is another necessity. Hydration is key to fighting off symptoms. Compression clothing, such as stockings or socks, helps with blood circulation and heart rate.

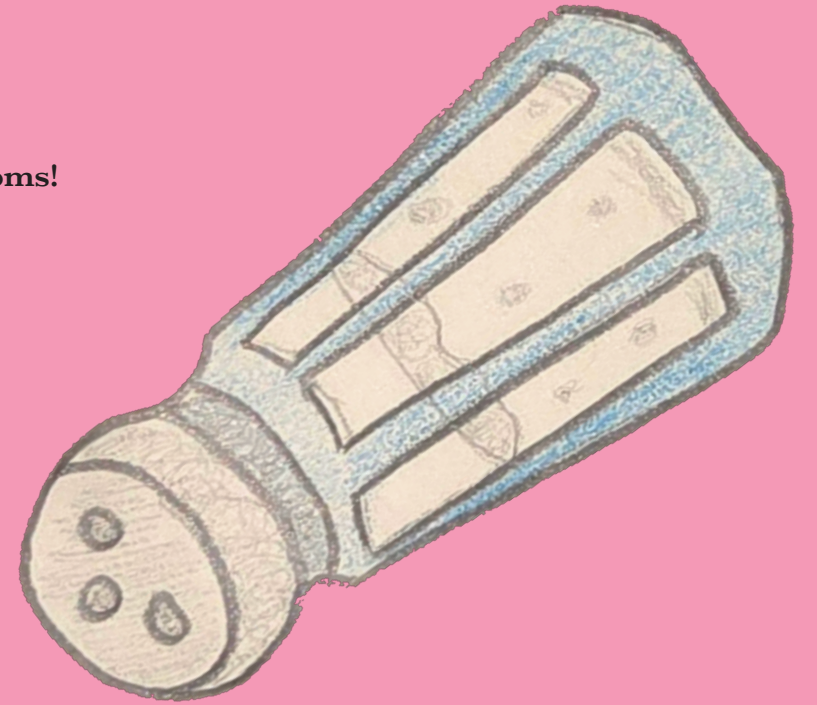
If you do not have POTS, a great way to help care for someone who does is to be supportive. If they are having a flare of symptoms, get them salt, water and a comfortable place to sit. Let them know that they are not alone and try to learn more about what they go through.



Junior Sydney Coppola performing tricep extensions

TIPS

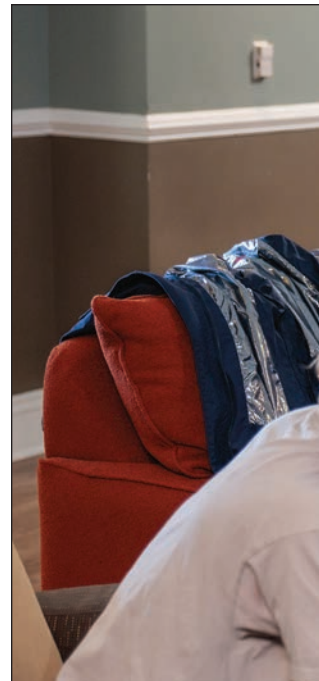
Follow these tips to help decrease symptoms!



Freshman Soplíe Prevot walking on the treadmill

Going for Gold

Story by Grace Feenstra, Health & Fitness Editor and
Jina Hughes, Asst. Health & Fitness Editor
Photos by Jessie Martinez, Photographer
Graphics by Anabel Flores, Graphic Artist



Freshmen August Hopson, Riley Sampson
and Lucas Casaletta-Holmes watching the Winter Olympics

Every four years, sports enthusiasts all over the globe gather around to watch the Winter Olympic Games. Whether your favorite sport is figure skating, curling, snowboarding, skiing or you just watch to cheer for your home country the Olympics has something for everyone. This year, the top teams were Norway, the United States and the Netherlands in this order. Norway achieved eighteen gold medals, twelve silver medals and eleven bronze medals. The U.S. achieved twelve gold, twelve silver and nine bronze medals. The U.S. achieved twelve gold, twelve silver and nine bronze medals.

The Netherlands achieved ten gold, seven silver and three bronze. All of the athletes came and performed the best that they could and brought pride to their country and viewers.

Freshman Cathy Aung said, "For my favorite sport for the Winter Olympics it's going to be figure skating. All of the routines were so good and I loved seeing an all Asian leaderboard for women." Aung also described her favorite Olympians Alysia Liu and Eliseo Gu as talented and gorgeous. Whether it is the national pride garnered from Alysia Liu or the admiration towards Eliseo Gu—the respect the Olympians have earned for themselves and their country is prominent.



However, the viewership and interest among non-supporters is just a present. Freshman, Jovanna Frye also turned her attention to the Winter Olympics this year. She watched various sports such as toboggan races and skiing. "I didn't watch long. Just the flying one was the longest. That was fun," she said. Although she did not put much time into observing the Olympics she could appreciate the technical aspects of each sport especially when it came to precision. "I watched the flipping one when they go down the hill and they like flip in the air. That one was probably my favorite because you could see how much it took to time the flips just right to get points." Frye said.

Although the eye catching talent and skill each athlete is known for drew the attention of many, there was one Olympian who stole the show. Alysia Liu won gold for the United States as a figure skater despite retiring years before. When Liu was 16 years old she made her debut at the 2022 Beijing Winter Games. Shortly after, she took to a Instagram post to announce her retirement. However, after approximately two years, Alysia Liu took the ice again in 2024. Since then she has reported taking more control over her career as she started to decide her own costumes and program music. She has won the heart of many Americans and sparked national pride as she draped herself in the American flag with her gold medal around her neck.

However, Liu is not the only American figure skater to follow this path of peace after an Olympic epiphany. Ilia Malinin has also found peace in figure skating after stating he blocked out the pressure and expectations that others placed on him. While he earned 8th place in this years Olympics he still achieved gold for the US in the figure skating team event. He would later go on to win gold again at the World Figure Skating Championships in Prague. Exemplifying that the impact the Olympics leave on athletes lingers far beyond the end of the games.

It is evident that anyone from any background and share the amazement and respect they have for the Winter Olympians and their sport. Whether you are an average college student or die-hard sports fan there is something to captivate you at the Winter Olympics 2026.





NAILED IT!

Story and Design by Litzy Reyes,
Style Editor
Photos By Laila Anderson,
Photographer

For many creative souls, the art of nail design is oftent a snippet of what we hold dear to our hearts. Whether choosing to use gemstones with an intricate sparkle or using the colors of the season, nail art is meant to be an expression of what makes you feel the most confident and empowered. Nail art is extremely personal, and it is particularly rewarding for the people behind the chair who make the magic happen. Nail artists are known for turning their client's visions into a seamless reality within seconds of them describing their dream nails. Their commitment to their craft is worthy of appreciation and will encourage you to take a day off, book a nail appointment and spend an afternoon in one of their chairs.

For Senior Carson Bonner, her last semester at Berry College has scarcely given her time to fit in everything that a last-semester college student has pending. However, her creative vision for nail art is one aspect of her life that she has continuously maintained. When asked about the beginning of her nail art journey, all roads lead back to Bonner's last year of high school when she realized she was overspending at her nail appointments.

"At nail salons, more than just applying plain nail polish is like \$60," Bonner said. "I soon realized I could buy a set of nail polish and be guaranteed 50 manicures with just that."

Despite the difficulty of learning the intricacies regarding best equipment and techniques, she found the process of trial and error most rewarding. Additionally, she was surrounded by people who supported her through the good and bad.

"One of my all-time favorite designs was a set I made for a friend that was pink and had green marbling," Bonner said. "They took a really long time because I had just learned how to use blooming gel, which requires a lot of brush work."

This initial encouragement from the special people in Bonner's life was the reminder she needed to keep going, and she found herself getting better every day she practiced. Today, she has even begun sharing her talents with other college students who are looking for a manicure.

"There is definitely a learning curve that comes to learning all of this, but really all it comes down to is practice and willingness to make mistakes," Bonner said. "You will get better, sometimes it is slower than you want it to be, but that is okay."

For Sophomore Naysa Chevere, nail art has served as a hobby that helps her overcome the stress of everyday life and incorporate her creativity in a fun, conducive way. Similarly to our previous nail artist's beginnings, Chevere began her nail art aspirations during high school as a pastime that also conveniently helped her save money. Despite describing herself as a perfectionist that struggled with the tedious process of finding what specific brands worked best for her, she never relented.

"I started about four years ago during my Sophomore year of high school," Chevere said. "I typically do Gel-X nails, and I like to use the brand Apres for the tips and Gellen and Gaoy for color."

While this process is helpful for the overall presentation of the nails, it is an additional way to place her undivided attention on a hobby she enjoys and step away from everything else in life.

"To be honest, it is difficult to choose a favorite," Chevere said. "I did leopard nails a few months ago and loved them so much."

Not only did she find a design that suited her personal style, but the nails made her feel confident and motivated every single day. Even when it felt like the learning curve was too much to handle, she prioritized the foundation of the nails.

"How you prep your nails always makes a difference in how long your sets last," Chevere said. "Get a good prep routine down and your retention should last a while."

While nail art practice looks different for everyone, it is undoubtedly a fun pastime that serves as a break from the intense workloads and priorities that arise for busy college students. It may not be a perfect, smooth road to finding your specific niche, but putting your best foot forward and giving the attempt everything you have is always a good first step. Whether you are actively finding people to share your craft with like Carson, or doing it for your own enjoyment like Naysa, the growth that inevitably arises from consistent practice and discipline is priceless.



to DYE for...

Story and Design by Kate Dahlberg, Asst. Style Editor
Photos by Alyssa Elmore, Photo Editor

Bleaching your hair the right way!

THE TOOLS

- plastic mixing bowl
- plastic mixing bowl
- rubber gloves
- sectioning clips
- peroxide developer (10-40 volume)
- hair bleach (powder, cream or oil)
- toner
- sulfate-free shampoo
- moisturizing treatment mask
- deep conditioner



BLEACH + DEVELOPER

Bleach and developer are separate items that are mixed together. A standard lift is 1 part bleach and 2 parts developer (1:2), but check the box instructions for what's recommended. For bleach/lightener, powder is the most common type, and the easiest to work with. Cream and oil lightener is better for on-scalp applications and delicate hair. Before you bleach, know what level your hair is, ranging from 1 being black to 10 being almost white. The standard level system helps you calculate how many bleach sessions you'll need. It's important to note that bleach WILL damage your hair to some extent, so invest in a quality brand. Peroxide/developer is combined with bleach to lift the color pigments, and it ranges from volumes 10-40. The volumes indicate how strong the developer is. Colorists do not recommend higher than 20 volume for the sake of protecting your hair.

- » Don't bleach your hair after it's been freshly washed; oily hair is safer.
- » Wear rubber gloves -- bleach can burn.
- » Start bleaching 1 cm from the root.



TONER

Once your hair comes out orange after bleaching, that's where toner comes in to help. This is the most complicated part of the process, and the results can sometimes be hard to predict. A toner either neutralizes unwanted color like orange or enhances the desired color.

- » Light blonde = purple for neutralizing, gold for enhancing
- » Medium/dark blonde = blue for neutralizing, gold/copper for enhancing
- » Auburn/red = green for neutralizing, red-copper for enhancing
- » Brown = green for neutralizing, red for enhancing

Toner also needs to be mixed with developer. The ratio of toner and developer varies per product.



Adding Color

If you do decide to bleach your hair, dying it with color is the easy part. Dying consists of spreading the box dye evenly throughout your hair with a brush or your hands.

Freshman Raccoon Toppen offers some pro-tips, advising to leave the color in longer than the box says to, and the less you wash your hair, the longer it will stay. "For the very first wash, I don't wash it out with shampoo, just normal conditioner. That lets the color stay longer, because it's not really washing it, it's just conditioning it and getting the hair dye out without stripping the color immediately," Toppen said. Along with conditioner, Toppen recommends rinsing with cold water for the first wash so the color stays longer. Toppen currently has pink hair. "Pink fades really well, blue will fade into a green-ish color. Pink also goes with everything I wear," Toppen said.

Freshman Anna Davis also shares their experience with using bleach and dye together. "If you want to do color, you definitely want to bleach it, because it doesn't really stick well to just natural hair," Davis said. Davis recommends dividing hair into sections to dye hair more thoroughly. Using a mirror or recruiting a friend is also a good option. Bleaching at home can be complicated without the proper knowledge. "As long as you know what you're doing, because then it could very much not be worth it," Davis said.

To get the best color out of box dye, always dye dry hair; wet hair prevents the color from being well absorbed. Similar to bleaching, you don't want to spread the color anywhere but your hair. Using rubber gloves, wearing clothes you don't care about and putting Vaseline or lip balm around your hairline are ways to keep the color in one place. Lastly, conditioning and buying color-safe shampoo are great ways to make the color last longer.

Whitney Collins, freshman



Left to right: Freshmen Anna Davis, Ellie Bossie and Raccoon Toppen dye their hair together in their dorm room.

Photo courtesy of Raccoon Toppen



Sophomore Annalise Hingst bleaches and dyes a strip of her hair green, purple, and pink.

Photo courtesy of Annalise Hingst.

JUST BECAUSE

Story and Design by Litzy Reyes. Style Editor
Photos By Laila Anderson, Photographer and
Alyssa Elmore, Photo Editor

We all have an outfit that, no matter how hard we try and find a special occasion to wear it, ends up in the back of our closet and never sees the light of day. While the sentiment of waiting for the perfect moment is human, it negates us from living life to the fullest. Instead of simply waiting for cryptic moments that are usually unexpected, your best creations are found within the messy, spontaneous searches. Finding what encompasses your style in one, singular outfit lies in the willingness to try out what sparks your interest and making it your own.

If there is one person who knows this lifestyle well, it is Freshman Lizvel Espino. When asked about why she makes the effort to dress with purpose, Espino said “Whether going out or running errands, I love a good outfit that makes me feel put together because even if it is simple, it is a general confidence booster.”

For many college students, the idea of overdressing can be intimidating. However, the composition of an outfit that makes you feel like the best version of yourself is an unmatched feeling. “My biggest advice is to dress up for yourself,” Junior Caitlin Light said. “Do not be afraid to push your boundaries, because that is what fashion is.”



Brenner Paz, Sophomore

Lizvel Espino, Freshman



Cathy Aung, Freshman



Lily Rose Chapman, Junior



Roxane Lyse, Sophomore



Charlotte Anderson May, Sophomore

It feels euphoric to compose an outfit that looks straight out of a Pinterest board. Giving yourself the liberty to dress in clothing that makes you feel like an extra on the set of your favorite TV show often serves as fashion's variation of dopamine. Junior Lily Chapman is no stranger to the art of taking inspiration from public figures and adding her own creative flair. “I love Jadey Bird’s style, but my forever style icon will always be Sarah Jessica Parker,” said Chapman.

No matter where we ultimately choose to formulate our preferred closet staples, getting over the hump of the fear of judgement is always the first step. “Stepping outside of your comfort zone might be exactly what you need to discover your personal style,” said Sophomore Brenner Paz.

While it may take some time to completely find your niche, focus on finding what sparks joy into your life and go from there. Wear the outfit, just because.



Neddy Garcia, Sophomore



Caitlin Light, Junior

A woman with long blonde hair is seen from the back, wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans. The t-shirt has the word "Patchy" printed on it. She is standing with her hands in her pockets.

Patchy Issues

Why it's so hard for women to find the perfect pair of pants

Have you ever been trying on jeans while shopping to find a pair of size 6 jeans smaller than the size 2? Women's jeans have been infamously known to be inconsistent in sizing, shape and material across different brands. The lack of standards in the market has produced a mountain of frustration, unhealthy obsession with weight, and body image issues in women. Men's jeans have had consistent sizing across different brands, measured by waist and inseam in inches. Many brands have tried and failed to develop a similar system for women, as women's body types vary much more than men's do. Women's pants prioritize fashion first, and pants second, while men's pants have always been the reverse.

Story and Design by Kate Dahlberg, Asst. Style Editor
Photos by Alyssa Elmore, Photo Editor

Are your jeans quality or trendy?

Everyone wants to dress nice, but clothing sales have proven that women care more about their appearance than men do. This thought has led to sizes being changed to sound more flattering by using a smaller and less precise system, fabric to be thinner to reduce bulk and pockets being small or omitted completely because pocket lines are considered unflattering. This practice specifically popularized the use of vanity sizing. Vanity sizing is the company lying about the size of their clothes to make the consumer feel better, and the main reason size greatly differs across brands. "I've seen vanity sizing almost everywhere when shopping for jeans," said Eliyah Ochoa, freshman. "My size per brand varies drastically. It's not enjoyable to see one's sizing being used to manipulate buyers." Low numbers are placed on large sizes (like labeling a size 10 jeans as a size 6) to make plus size women feel smaller, or large numbers are placed on small garments (like labeling a size 2 top as a size 8) to discourage plus size customers from shopping at their store.

The sizing system for men was first put in place in the Civil War to create military uniforms in bulk, and the same system is used today for men. In the 1940's and 1950's, a standardized sizing system for women was set up using statistical data to attempt to accommodate for the different body shapes. Yet after vanity sizing was introduced and became rampant, women's clothing gradually shifted away from standardized sizes. The sizes brands use today are very loosely based off of these original standardized sizes from the 40's and 50's.

Companies don't want a standardized sizing system for women; that would only seek to hurt their business. Brands don't want to accommodate the vast amount of difference in women's bodies and specialize the clothes because that would mean the manufacturer has to make more clothes for a more limited number of consumers. Creating a limited range of sizes is also helpful for sales due to women's taste in trendy fashion. "Fashion and jeans are constantly evolving so it's hard to keep up with what to wear," said Ashley Davenport, freshman. The whole fashion system is based on taking very calculated risks and educated predictions on what will sell. Women's garments are higher risk, emphasizing trendy and hot items versus men's garments which emphasize staple items. Brands don't want to produce a vast amount of product that will only sell for a brief period of time. This connects with women's jeans typically being lower in quality; the manufacturer tends to use a fabric with lower cotton content and higher polyester and spandex content so that the fabric is less expensive and stretchier to fit a wider range of people.

A brand typically targets a certain body shape (teen vs mature) or body types (petite vs curvy). If a woman has had a baby in the past, she shouldn't typically shop at a store whose target demographic is teenagers. Brands targeting older women will have pants for wider hips. Second, invest in long-term jeans and not fast fashion. Jeans should be made from quality material, even though women's pants tend to be thinner, have less substantial hems and either use faux pockets or no pockets at all.



Ashley Davenport, freshman

What's You?



Luz Cerda, Senior

Story and Design by Litzy Reyes, Style Editor
Photos by Laila Anderson, Photographer



Tynaijah Jackson, Sophomore

Savannah Talley, Sophomore

When all else fails, personalization never does. Whether this means finding a colorful water bottle that reminds you to drink the recommended daily intake or using a totebag that makes you more excited to pull out your surplus of notebooks and flashcards, being intentional about how you personalize your items can make you feel more excited about the school year ahead.

Senior Luz Cerda embodies the sentiment “feel good, look good” in everything she does. Not only has she made a habit of finding clothing that show off her girly, feminine style, the daily items she uses follow suit. “My Juicy Couture school bag is the perfect shade of pink,” said Cerda. “Yes, sometimes it is really heavy, but it always looks cute with any outfit.”

Although personalizing your items may seem like only one more thing to worry about, these items can pave the way for better results of something truly

important. Sophomore Savannah Talley has experienced this firsthand. “Being able to pull out my laptop, covered with stickers and logos that represent who I am, always encourages me to get my homework done,” said Talley.

For many students who spend a vast majority of their day confined inside the walls of McAllister Hall study rooms, they hold this need for encouragement near and dear to their hearts. Sophomore Tynaijah Jackson finds solace in her painting hobby and managed to personalize her tote bag in a way that expresses her vintage style. “This totebag is a way for me to come across as chic as possible, and the individual designs truly embody me as a person,” said Jackson.

For more adventurous students, personalization can be found within hobbies that spark an adrenaline rush. Freshman Amber Cornett uses a waterbot-
tle with stickers that showcase

all the national parks she has visited. “I like my water bottle because it serves as a reminder of all the adventures I have had,” said Cornett. “My favorite is Zion National Park in Utah.”

No matter how different, personalization brings forth authenticity for all who are brave enough to try. College can bring forth an immense amount of stress for many students. However, finding creative ways to bring little joys into seemingly mundane tasks is oftentimes the unexpected solution. Instead of simply going through the motions of life, personalize what brings you joy in life.



Amber Cornett, Freshman

Culture

in Your

Closet

Story & Design by Kate Dahlberg,
Asst. Style Editor
Photos by Laila Anderson, photographer

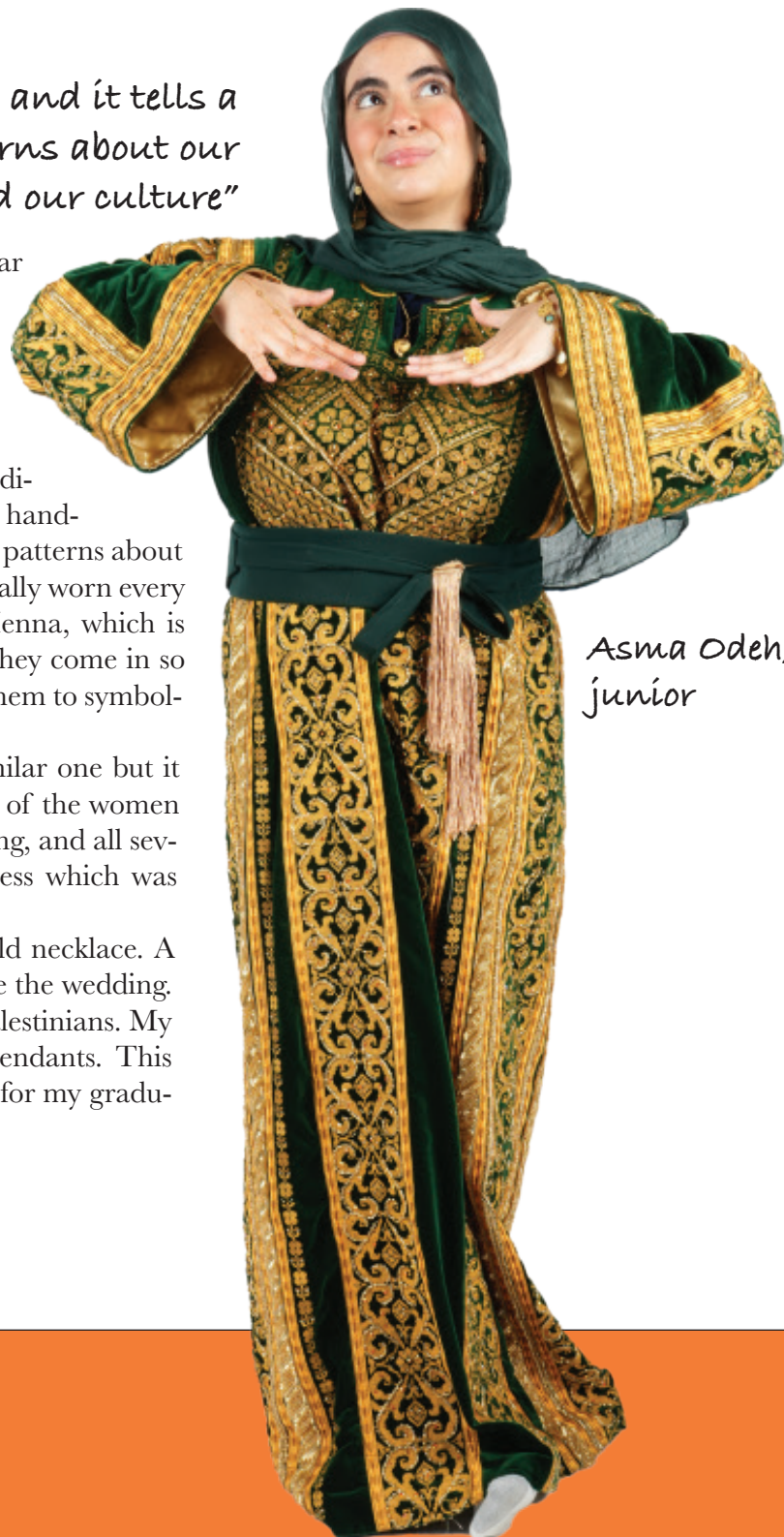
"These dresses are hand-stitched, and it tells a story when you look at the patterns about our freedom and our culture"

Women in Palestine traditionally wear loose-fitting robes with adorned headpieces. The robes vary in fabric per region. The robes are intricately embroidered, are considered an art form and indicate a woman's origin.

"I'm wearing a thobe; it is a Palestinian traditional dress. The majority of these dresses are hand-stitched, and it tells a story when you look at the patterns about our freedom and our culture. They are traditionally worn every day, but now it's been switched over to our Henna, which is an event that happens before a wedding day. They come in so many fun colors and designs, and people wear them to symbolize Palestinian culture.

This dress is actually my mom's. I had a similar one but it didn't have velvet on it, so I took my mom's. All of the women in my family made a dress for my uncle's wedding, and all seventeen of us were wearing this exact same dress which was nice to see the culture and family tied together.

My necklace is a Loza, a very traditional gold necklace. A groom traditionally gives this to the bride before the wedding. All of my jewelry is real gold and symbolizes Palestinians. My bracelet is a Turkish lira with Turkish coin pendants. This bracelet is special to me, my mom gave me this for my graduation," said Odeh.



Asma Odeh,
junior



Juan Franco

"I got my jersey from Colombia; I love my national team. I'm already getting excited for the World Cup coming up, to show the culture and my colors. Soccer makes me think of all my family getting together to watch the game."



Marielle Peguero

"I got this necklace last summer from a jewelry store in Guadalajara. I wear the necklace every single day because I like carrying the Virgin Mary close to my heart."

"Even though I'm Mexican-American, I have a piece of my home away from home with me at all times"

Traditional Mexican clothing for women include a vibrant mix of embroidery, colorful fabrics and a long flowing skirt. Floral and geometric patterns reflect nature and indigenous beliefs. Freshman Elijah Ochoa's whole outfit is from Mexico, from her gold earrings down to her shoes.

"Whenever my abuela goes down to Mexico, she always brings things back for me, like dresses and other pieces of clothing she knows I'll like. She brought me this red shirt dress this winter. My dad is from Mexico, and I come from a Latin household. My abuela basically raised me while my parents worked. To have her bring clothing back from Mexico for me makes me feel more connected to my culture because it's a part of Mexico I can keep with me and just know it was made there. It's comforting in a way, to have a piece of home with you. Even though I'm Mexican-American, I have a piece of my home away from home with me at all times," said Ochoa.



Elijah Ochoa,
freshman

It often feels like everywhere we turn we come across an endearing, heart-eyed couple happily roaming the flower-filled sidewalks of campus. While it may compel us to grab a tub of icecream and rewatch *Titanic* for the millionth time, there is something special about admiring their sincere happiness.

No matter their differences and occasional disagreements, the love they hold for each other conquers all. When asked about his girlfriend, Wyatt Halstead said, “I love her consistency and how she shows up for me daily, no matter the circumstance.”

However, if there is one thing that is unique to each couple, it is the clothes that compliment their aesthetic and brings their love story to life. If a picture is worth a thousand words, clothes are worth a million. Fashion, whether the comfort level or the colors they choose to wear most, is a statement that combines their personality and aesthetic into one.

“My outfit shows off my bubbly side, while his shows off his more calm and cool personality,” said Junior Elizabeth Boor.

Additionally, clothing is often symbolic of how two people come together and spark good change into each others lives.

“I brought the love of fashion into Peter’s life when we both started thrifting and learning how to be more sustainable together,” said Sophomore Faith Owens.

In any case, a couple learns the rule of unrequited love through the oftentimes forgotten love language that is fashion.

“He teaches me patience every day,” said Sophomore Fernanda Benjume, “Especially when he wears the shoes that are a bit questionable.”

THE LOVE LANGUAGE OF FASHION

Story and Design by
Litzy Reyes, Style Editor
Photos by Laila Anderson, Photographer



Parker Collins,
Sophomore



Faith Owens,
Sophomore



Daniel
Murphey,
Senior

Fernanda
Benjume,
Sophomore



Sophia
Ghavidel
Sophomore



Wyatt
Halstead,
Sophomore

Miguel De Leon, Senior



Elizabeth Boor,
Junior



Left to Right: Sophia Eaton (sophomore), Caroline Adams (freshman) and Caroline Morris (sophomore) working KCAB's Drive-In Movie event.
Photo Courtesy of Sophia Eaton.



Berry students enjoy the Back to Berry Bash, hosted this year by KCAB.
Photo courtesy of Caroline Morris.



Bottom Left: Left to Right, Lily Turmail (freshman) and Caroline Morris (sophomore) working a Pottery in the Path event for a Berry College basketball game.
Photo Courtesy of Caroline Morris.

Bottom Right: Left to Right, KCAB's Executive Board: Gabby Cruz (junior), Abbey Hart (junior), Brittani Farmer, Caroline Morris (sophomore) and Zach Sevdv (senior).
Photo courtesy of Caroline Morris.



Left: KCAB holds their spring semester bonding event at Swerve: Off the Path Pottery in downtown Rome.
Photo courtesy of Abbey Hart.

Inside KCAB: Creating Campus Culture

Story and Design by Cheyenne Anderson,
Arts & Culture Editor
Photos by Alyssa Elmore, Photo Editor
Graphics by Sawyer Lignugaris, Graphics Asst. Editor

One of the many offerings of Berry outside of its students' educations is the variety of on-campus events students can attend. Planning, organizing and hosting many of these events is one of the primary responsibilities of Krannert Center Activity Board (KCAB), a faculty-advised and student-driven organization on campus. KCAB has been operating on campus for over 50 years. Previously, students had the opportunity to volunteer with the organization, but now, students work with KCAB through the LifeWorks program at Berry.

Brittani Farmer, Director of Student Involvement, oversees the work of KCAB students and helps guide them when necessary. She is present during KCAB's weekly meetings and stays in consistent contact with her student staff throughout the entire event planning process. Farmer mostly allows the students to take the lead in bringing events to life and says she loves seeing their excitement when things finally come together. "They want to plan events that everyone can enjoy, and have a good time at, and make memories for when they look back at Berry and think about the best time they had," she said.

Caroline Morris, sophomore, has been working with KCAB since her freshman year. Morris was drawn to KCAB because of her background with her high school's student council and stayed because of the welcoming environment. "The community is so good in KCAB; we're all a big old family, and it's fun to just be together," she said. Caroline Adams, freshman, holds a similar sentiment to that of Farmer. She says her favorite part of working for KCAB is seeing their ideas for events become reality. Whether a study break throughout the semester or a major weekend event, KCAB helps provide Berry students with the opportunity to make memories that last long after they graduate.

Top: Left to Right, Caroline Morris (sophomore) and Zach Sevdv (senior) excitedly await the start of the 2026 Mountain Day Olympics.

Photo courtesy of Caroline Morris.

Top Middle: Abbey Hart (junior) leads KCAB's weekly meeting.

Bottom Middle: KCAB director team enjoys the National Association for Campus Activities conference in Columbus, Ohio.

Photo courtesy of Abbey Hart.

Bottom: The KCAB team poses with Jayo after their first official event of the semester: Back to Berry Bash.

Photo courtesy of Abbey Hart.



Films Of The Season

Story and Design by Bella Ardell, Asst. Arts & Culture Editor
Photos by Alyssa Elmore, Photo Editor
Graphics by Sawyer Lignugaris, Graphics Asst. Editor

Valkyrie's Pick

Spring

Review from Kate Dahlberg,
Asst. Style Editor

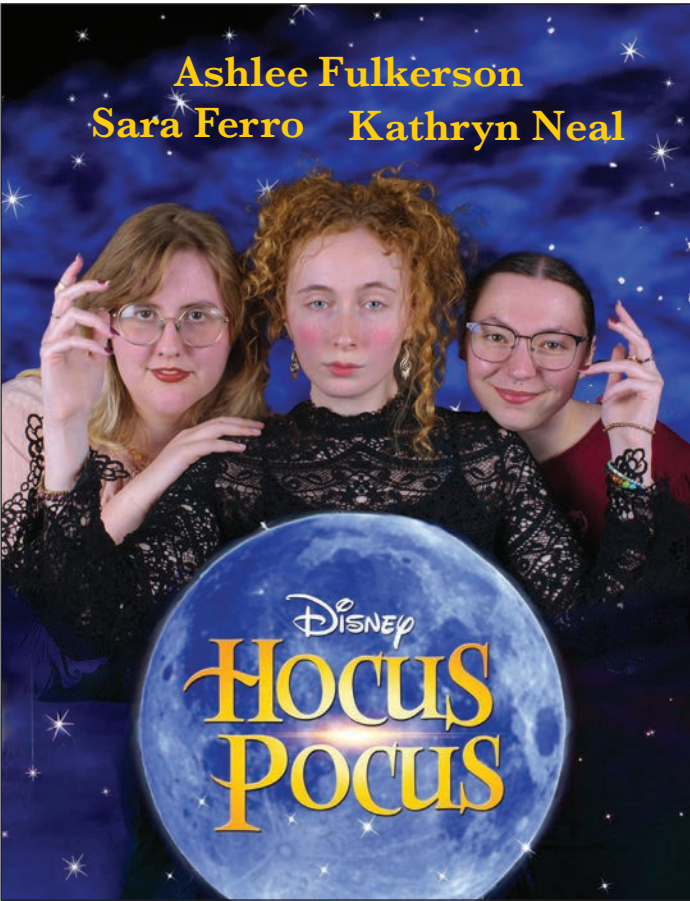
"The movie is visually beautiful, with the plot being centered around the two main characters touring Poland. The characters are cousins that are reunited on a history tour of Poland to honor their late grandmother, and humor is combined with the question of what kind of pain is valid? Kieran Culkin kills it in the movie."



Fall

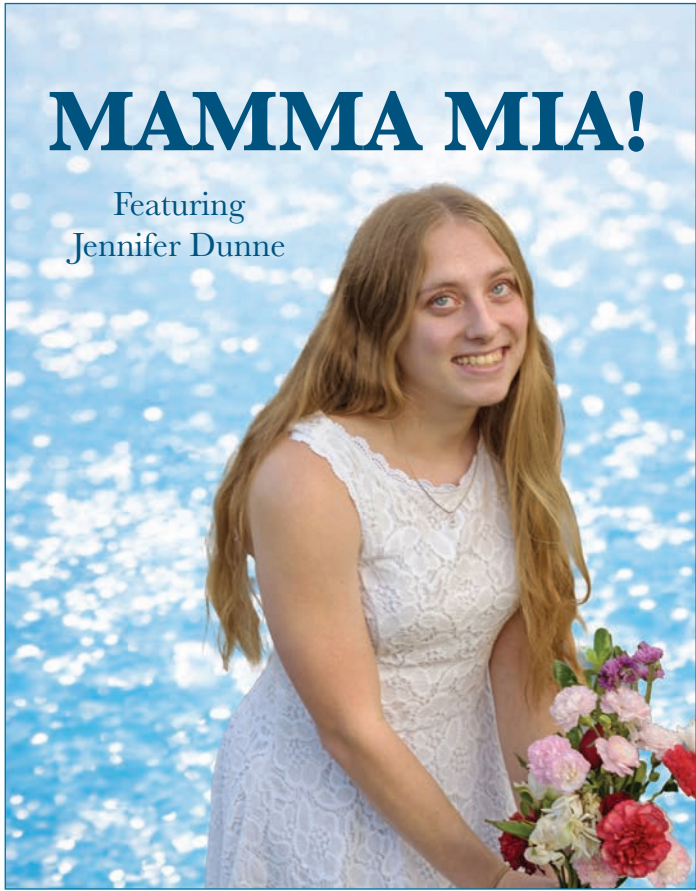
Review from Bailey Casey,
Writer

"A classic Halloween movie; catchy songs, great actors, good story, and traditional 90s heartthrob boys. Good break from horror and thrillers for some good, campy fun!"



MAMMA MIA!

Featuring
Jennifer Dunne



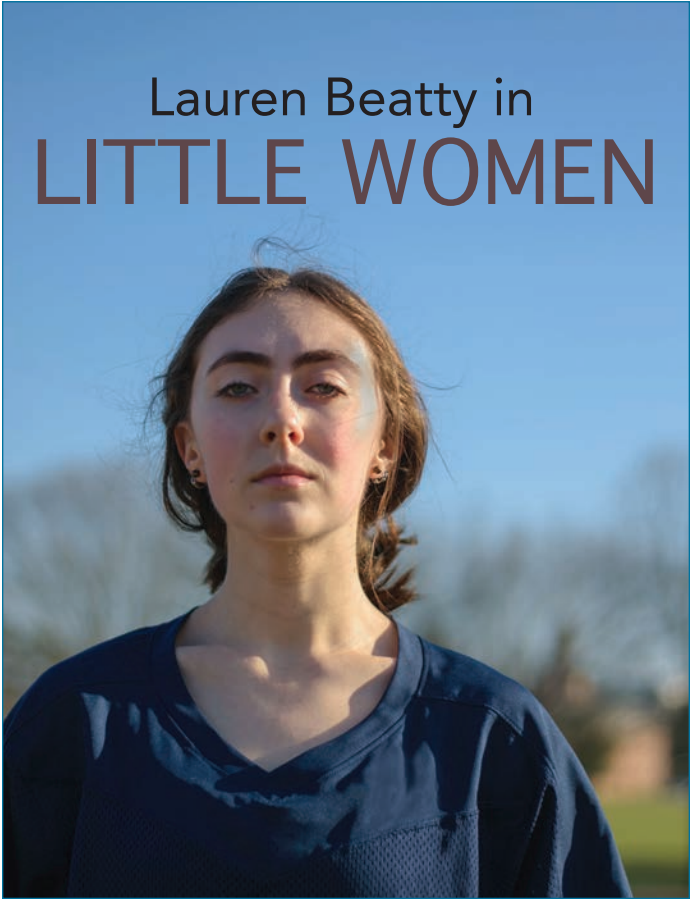
Summer

Review from Addison Hill,
STEM Editor

"I absolutely love Mamma Mia because it is such a lively, fun movie that encapsulates the feeling of summer. The storyline, along with the humor and amazing soundtrack, keep you interested in the whole film."



Lauren Beatty in LITTLE WOMEN



Winter

Review from Litzy Reyes,
Style Editor

"Little Women is a beautiful masterpiece that emphasize the importance of family. The gorgeous scenery, the interesting plot and wonderful themes bring forth a sense of fall magic that can be found through the talents of actresses like Emma Watson and Florence Pugh."



WHICH CAMERA?

Story and Design by Cheyenne Anderson, Arts & Culture Editor
Photos by Alyssa Elmore, Photo Editor



Choosing the right camera for a creative project isn't just a technical decision; it can impact every aspect of the outcome of your work. The gear you bring shapes the mood, pace, and texture of the final image, whether you're shooting in the chaos of an on-site location or the controlled environment of a studio. This article breaks down what specific features to look for when choosing a camera (and supporting equipment) for various creative endeavors.

Start With What You Have

Beginners don't need expensive gear to get started. A phone or basic entry-level camera is enough to learn composition, lighting and timing. As your skills grow, you can gradually work your way up to more advanced equipment.

Match Camera to Purpose

Your creative goals should guide your gear. If you're shooting fast action or sports, a camera with quick autofocus and fast writing speeds will keep up. For hybrid shooters who do both photo and video, look for models with strong megapixel performance and flexible frame-rate options.

Consider the Whole System

A camera is only one piece of the puzzle. Lenses, audio equipment, batteries, memory cards, and even the weight of your setup all affect how smoothly you can work. It is crucial to have reliable bags, cords, chargers, and microphones.

File Size and Workflow

If you're shooting video, resolution and frame rate matter. Higher settings like 4K or 60 - 120 fps create beautiful footage but also produce large files that require more storage and faster cards. Choosing the right balance helps keep your workflow efficient.

Invest Slowly and Intentionally

Every creative will agree: quality gear is expensive, so it is easier to build your kit over time. Start with essentials, like a versatile lens or a dependable mic, and add specialized tools only when your creative needs demand them.



Photo-focused cameras prioritize fast autofocus, high-quality stills and strong sensor performance, while video-oriented bodies emphasize frame-rate flexibility, resolution options and efficient file handling. Choose the body that best matches whether you're capturing moments or motion.



Extra batteries and reliable SD cards keep your shoot running smoothly, especially during long sessions. Fast, high-capacity cards ensure your camera can keep up with your workflow.

Tripods, lights, and similar accessories add stability and control, helping you shape your scene rather than react to it. These tools elevate production quality without requiring major technical expertise.



Sports shooters rely on fast-reading SD or CF express cards to handle rapid bursts without slowing down. Pairing them with a telephoto lens gives you the reach and clarity needed to capture action from a distance.



Good audio gear, like shotgun mics, wireless systems or simple plug-ins, can transform the professionalism of your video. Clear sound often matters just as much as clear visuals.



Different lenses do different things. For example, a 100-300mm lens gives you long-range reach for distant subjects, the 70-200mm offers versatile telephoto flexibility for portraits or sports and the 28-70mm provides a wide-to-standard range perfect for everyday shooting and mobile creativity.





Ramifications staff at the fall semester Ram Slam, the end of semester reading to celebrate the newest issue.

Top Row, Left to Right: Cole Alexander (25c), James Fox (junior) and Roger Thomas (senior)
Bottom Row, Left to Right: Emma Simmons ('junior), Gabby Miller (sophomore), Bailey Casey (senior), Abbie King (25c), Grace Sorrells (senior), Marisa Jursek (senior) and Elli Palmquist (freshman)

Photo courtesy of Bailey Casey.

Curating Creativity:

A Look Inside Ramifications

Story and Design by Cheyenne Anderson, Arts & Culture Editor



Ramifications staff bond during a photoshoot at Capitoline Records.

Photo courtesy of Bailey Casey.

Ramifications is the Literary and Arts Magazine of Berry. Each semester, they carefully select work from various students to create a magazine that reflects the work of the student body, not just those in creative majors.

After students submit to Ramifications, the process begins with anonymous voting on a scale from 1 - 5. A 4 or 5 indicates the staff would prefer to include this in the magazine, while a 3 indicates the staff has no strong opinions on that piece. After all the

pieces have been voted on, the pieces that scored a 3 or above move on to the decision stage, where the staff begins working on the final decisions of what pieces will be included in the magazine. Once final decisions are made, they start organizing pieces based on what themes they see and begin planning the layout of the pages. These steps ensure that every issue of Ramifications reflects both the diversity of student voices and the thoughtful curation behind the magazine's final form.



Marisa Jursek, '26

Volunteer/Staff Member

Years with Ram: 1
Favorite Part of Ram: "I enjoy getting to talk about literature and art. And getting to work on the actual magazine itself has been really fun."
Message to Students: "Submit!"

Bailey Casey, '26

Art Editor

Years with Ram: 4
Favorite Part of Ram: "I enjoy seeing what Berry College Students produce, . . . because sometimes if can feel like you're siloed off from the rest of the creative people on campus."
Message to Students: "Do not be afraid."



Elli Palmquist, '29

Volunteer/Staff Member

Years with Ram: 1
Favorite Part of Ram: "We went to Capitoline Records in Rome, and we dressed up in a certain style and had a photoshoot, and it was really fun."
Message to Students: "I think people should submit. It's a great opportunity for people to get their art and literature and writing and poetry out there for their peers to see."

Want to Submit?

Interested in submitting to Ramifications? Next semester, Ramifications will open submissions for their fall issue of the publication. Students are allowed up to 10 submissions, and any work submitted to Ramifications must not be published anywhere else to be considered. Once submissions open, you can find the link to submit through a QR code on the posters across campus or on Ramifications's Instagram page.



Love, Ram Staff
Photo courtesy of Bailey Casey.

Keep Calm & Art On

Story and Design by Bella Ardell,
Asst. Arts & Culture Editor
Photos by Alyssa Elmore, Photo Editor



Stress, builds up from everyday pressures such as classes and work life. Yet artistic outlets are one of the many methods that can bring momentary calm.

Professor of psychology Kristen Diliberto-Macaluso said a variety of artistic activities could count as an outlet. She provided some options such as calm activities like painting and writing poetry, as well as more performance related ones like dance and theatre.

These activities are helpful to individuals in the Berry community who struggle under academic pressure. One of the negative affects of this pressure is chronic stress. This condition causes insomnia, stress eating, a weakened immune systems and difficulty when it comes to focusing in school. When addressing chronic stress, Assistant professor of psychology Kuo Deng said that it can lead to burnout. The symptoms include dreading class, lacking motivation in work and losing interest in learning.

Yet with the use of artistic outlets people on campus can find temporary relief. Diliberto-Macaluso said that artistic outlets can be used to find temporary relief from busy life by preventing students from ruminating on currently stressors.

Artistic outlets can specifically help people to deal with negative emotions, such as sadness or anger. Deng said that society is focused on being productive, especially for students, and will not allow students to feel the negative emotions they experience. Instead the emotions build up, leading to mental issues such as anxiety and depression.

Before psychology was relevant, artistic activities were used as a common outlet for these negative emotions. "It becomes this escape that I think in today's world, when it doesn't allow us to have negative emotions, the artistic outlet becomes this natural escape that we could be back to where we used to be." Deng said. Through these outlets, people can ground themselves and return to



Senior Anna Rinaggio expressing herself through ballet.

work feeling much calmer.

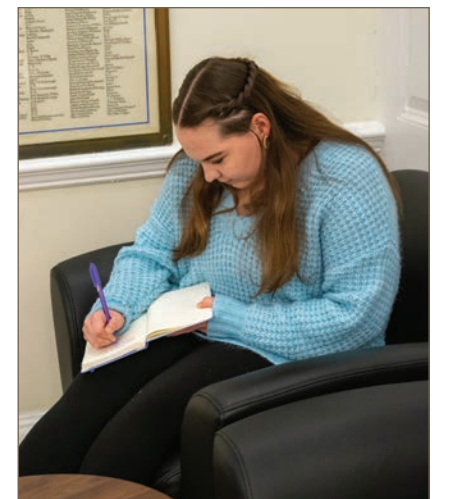
Assistant professor of art Dennis Ritter, who teaches ceramics classes at Berry, said people can express their feelings by playing with clay because it feels cathartic. He added how moldable clay can be hit to relieve built-up tension as it disconnects individuals from daily life.

According to Ritter, there is no time requirement to produce a positive effect when it comes to artistic outlets. "It's just a matter of giving yourself time for that moment and not the pressure of having to finish anything," Ritter added.

Diliberto-Macaluso agreed and added more examples of how simple it is to find relief with artistic outlets without impacting your daily schedule, such as writing in a journal every night or finding a private room in the gym to take a break to dance every evening.

With so many options, people must think about what they are able to do and what options they are interested in. According to Diliberto-Macaluso, no outlet requires great skill or perfection, for example anyone can paint.

When searching for the correct outlet Deng suggested looking into your childhood, especially if you had a specific interest when you were younger. Not everyone has a childhood artistic interest though but



Senior Kaitlyn Beaver writing daily reflections in a journal.

Deng had suggestions regarding that. "You have to explore and see which one is the one that speaks your language and fits you best." Deng said.

Artistic outlets are a type of stress relief that has been used to help humanity from the beginning of time. It is a method still used today, and a simple solution for any student who needs a quick break.

Martha's Memory:

Mountain Day Traditions Then vs. Now

Story and Design by Cheyenne Anderson, Arts & Culture Editor



Left: Students participating in the Mountain Day Grand March 1976.
Photo courtesy of Berry College Archives.

Right: Berry students pose together after the Mountain Day March.
Photo courtesy of Caroline Pass.



Students participating in the Mountain Day Grand March, ca. 1950s.
Photo courtesy of Berry College Archives.

Martha Says March!

The Mountain Day Grand March has been a part of Mountain Day tradition since the beginning. Students join hands and march down mountain campus, dropping pennies equal to their age (or more, if student want to give) in a picnic basket to fundraise for Berry scholarships. Students are also encouraged to wear certain colors that hail back to the uniforms Berry students wore in the past. Typically, senior women wear pastel blue and senior men wear white. Junior, sophomore and freshman women wear pastel pink, and the men wear light blue. In the past, color assignments for the Grand March were based on gender and classification. However, students today can wear the color of their choice or opt to wear navy or silver instead, representing the College's



Above: Students dressed as seniors for the suite-style dorms Mountain Day Olympics team.
Photo courtesy of Mary Sass.

Below: Steve Chaffe participating in a Mountain Day Olympic event in front of the Krannert Center, 1987.
Photo courtesy of Berry College Archives.



Left: People picnicking on Mountain Day, ca. 1900s.
Photo by Robert McCullough, courtesy of Berry College Archives.

Right: Left to Right, Milo Antunes (junior), Victoria Andrade (junior) and Job Callis (junior) enjoy the Mountain day picnic.
Photo courtesy of Caroline Pass.



Olympics, Picnic & More!

The Mountain Day Olympics and Mountain Day Picnic are also key elements of Mountain Day Weekend that have always been a part of the celebration of Berry's founder. Though specific details may vary year to year, the core premise remains the same. However, some other parts of Mountain Day we all know and love are actually more recent additions, such as the market, football game, and Marthapalooza. Though not an original piece of Mountain Day, each of these events still showcase the spirit and community of Berry College evident in the more traditional events.

Top Right: A group of friends at the Mountain Day Market.
Photo courtesy of Alyssa Elmore.

Bottom Right: Left to Right, Mary Sass (senior) and Alanna Avery at Marthapalooza.
Photo courtesy of Mary Sass.

Bottom Left: Left to Right, Emma Brucker (junior), Caroline Pass (junior) and Emilee Easley (junior) at Marthapalooza.
Photo courtesy of Caroline Pass.



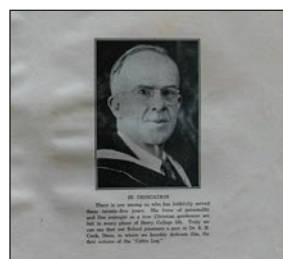
Cheers to 10 Years

Story and Design by Cheyenne Anderson, Arts & Culture Editor and Bella Ardell, Asst. Arts & Culture Editor
Photos by Alyssa Elmore, Photo Editor



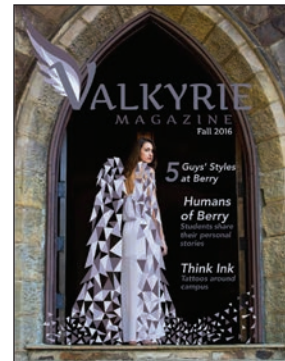
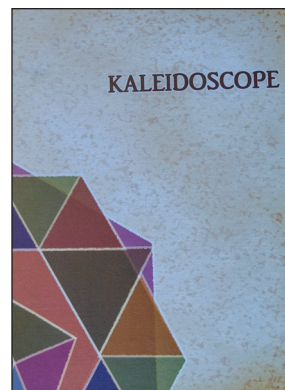
1935: First Cabin Log

The first volume of the Cabin Log was printed in 1935. It served to portray the students, sports, clubs, events and more of that academic year. Essentially, it was Berry's version of a yearbook.



2016: Last Cabin Log

In 2016, Berry printed the last volume of the Cabin Log, which then transitioned to a new publication, Valkyrie Magazine partially replaced the Cabin log as a publication focused on Berry student life.



2016: First Issue of Valkyrie

Valkyrie's first issue printed during the fall of 2016. "The heart stayed the same," according to Sara Neal (19c), who served as the managing editor during Valkyrie's inaugural year. Valkyrie shares its purpose with its predecessor: to capture student life. Though, now, the whole of student life is split between multiple publications (Valkyrie, Campus Carrier and Ramifications) instead of one.



2026: Valkyrie's 10 Year Anniversary

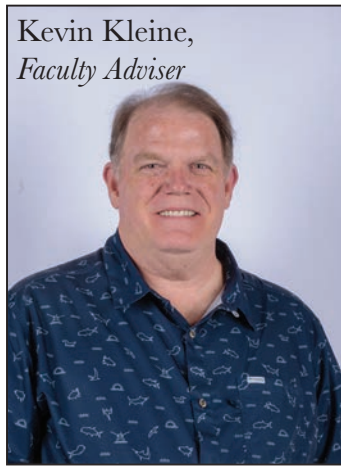
The fall of 2026 will mark a decade of Valkyrie serving the people of Berry College. As Valkyrie celebrates 10 years of publication, we look back on our origins and celebrate how we have reached where we are today.



We also wish to specially honor Mr. Kevin Kleine as he enters retirement. Mr. Kleine has served as the faculty adviser for Valkyrie since its inception, as well as its sister publications Ramifications Literary Magazine and the Campus Carrier, for 38 years. Without his leadership, none of these publications would be where they are today.



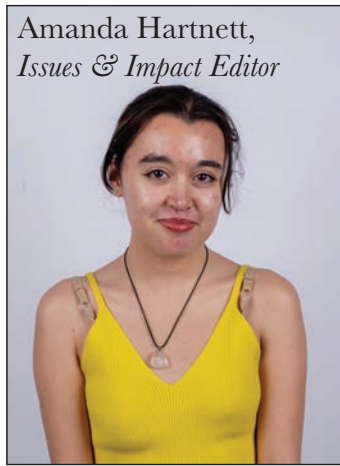
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Managing Editor



Kevin Kleine,
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Sophia Eaton,
Digital Content Editor



Amanda Hartnett,
Issues & Impact Editor



Addie Hill,
STEM Editor



Lily Ruppert,
Food Editor



Cai DeFelice,
Asst. Food Editor



Grace Feenstra,
Health & Fitness Editor



Jina Hughes,
Asst. Health & Fitness Editor

Meet THE STAFF



Litzy Reyes,
Style Editor



Kate Dahlberg,
Asst. Style Editor

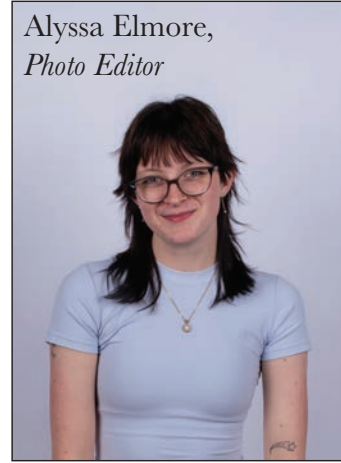


Cheyenne Anderson,
Arts & Culture Editor



Bella Ardell,
Asst. Arts & Culture Editor

A letter from the Editor...



Alyssa Elmore,
Photo Editor



Jessie Martinez,
Photographer



Hayleigh Holcomb,
Graphics Editor

To me, Valkyrie is Berry...

When I arrived as a freshman, I could not have anticipated how deeply this magazine would shape me. What began as a place to learn became a place to belong. It became a space that challenged me, steadied me and quietly taught me who I am.

Throughout my four years here, I have held onto a simple intention: to leave this magazine better than I found it. In that pursuit, "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister," became more than words; it became a way of leading. I learned that care, patience and faith in others are what transform this publication into a community.

To everyone who gave their voice, their time and their trust: Thank you. You are the heart of this magazine, and it has been an honor to grow alongside you.

To our readers:

Thanks for being here. Thank you for turning the pages, sharing these stories and making this all feel worth it. I hope you enjoyed the read!

I leave with deep gratitude and deeper love, confident that what we've built will continue to flourish. Cheers to another 10 years of Valkyrie and a successful season of change.

Carolina Mendoza,
Editor-in-Chief



-Caro



Sydney Martinez,
Photographer



Laila Anderson,
Photographer



Anabel Flores,
Graphic Artist



Bailey Casey,
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